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THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL

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Edited by
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The Teachings of Jesus

BY
HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL

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THY KINGDOM COME ON EARTH

THE kingdom of God does not complete itself in the redemption of the individual. It includes the individual and infinitely more. The Kingdom means that some day science and society, commerce and letters and trade shall be purified, and uplifted till they are in happy harmony with the will and purpose of the divine Father. Only so can there be anything like an adequate answer to the first petition of our Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come and thy will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven."

Jesus clearly intended that his disciples should interest themselves in the temporal and earthly aspects of the heavenly Father's dominion and power. They are to pray for the coming of his Kingdom, and the accomplishment of his will on earth, even as they pray for daily bread or for the forgiveness of sin. "Thy kingdom come. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins." To pray thus sincerely and intelligently presupposes active participation in the working program of the Kingdom; that is, in all those activities making for that transformation and reconstruction of life through which alone individuals and organized society can be brought into accord with the will and the rule of God.

Too often in human history the sharp contrast between actual conditions and the higher demands of the Christian ideal has discouraged those upon whom rested the responsibility for making that ideal real. A short-range view of life has obscured the actual growth of the Kingdom which the larger perspective of history reveals. In the face of the overwhelming preponderance of sin and selfishness in the world the Christian Church has again and again contented itself with snatching as many brands as possible from the burning, without, at the same time, seeking to organize the

constructive forces of life and of society for the seemingly impossible task of putting out the conflagration. Thus the actual process of the Kingdom's coming among men has proceeded for the most part "without observation," like the first growth of the seed that has been buried in the soil.

It is possible to-day, in the light of the completed records of the Old and New Testaments and the subsequent history of the Christian centuries, to discover definite stages of advance with successive landmarks of progress in the gradual establishment of the reign of God in individual lives and in the institutions of mankind. Such a survey of progress already achieved should hearten the organized Christian forces in their forward look and their endeavor to establish still more firmly among men the principles and ideals of the Kingdom. It should encourage the individual to redouble his efforts and inspire in him an unfaltering confidence in the ultimate realization and triumph of God's rule. Herein lies the purpose of the special course of study in the development of the Kingdom of God in which this volume constitutes one textbook.

Beginning with a brief consideration of the fundamentals of religion and the nature of man and of Deity, the studies trace the development of religious experience and ideas among the Hebrews and the Jewish people down to the beginning of the Christian era. This early period, covering the development of the Kingdom in Old Testament times, is presented in two volumes of twenty-six study chapters each, the division being made at the point in the historical development following the rise of eighth-century prophetism and the fall of Samaria. In similar manner two volumes are devoted to the Life and Teachings of Jesus which are assumed to be of central importance in the forward and upward movement of humanity. *The Teachings of Jesus* are presented in this volume.

Subsequent studies present in two volumes a survey of the development of the Kingdom since the time of Christ, including a discussion of those social-religious movements of the present day, the support and inspiration for which are to be found primarily in the Christian conception of

God and the world. The concluding volume of the series is entitled *The Christian Hope* and presents in constructive form the abiding faith of the Christian fellowship in the final triumph of the kingdom of God.

It is confidently expected that in their revised form these studies will serve a two-fold purpose. As elective courses for adult Bible classes interested in this vital and most fascinating of all studies, their usefulness has been much enhanced. At the same time they are intended to meet the increasing demand for modern textbooks written in scholarly spirit but popular style for preparatory and high schools and for advanced groups in week-day religious instruction in local parishes. That they are admirably suited for either purpose will be evident from an examination of any one of the volumes in the series.

THE EDITORS.

A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

THE character of this volume is explained in part by the title of the series to which it belongs, "The Kingdom of God Series." Under that general title there are a number of studies covering Old and New Testament times and Christian history since Jesus' day. The title itself expresses the conviction that the meaning of history is to be found in the thought of a new world which God is shaping, a kingdom of truth and righteousness which is being established upon earth.

Such a dynamic conception involves a correspondingly dynamic treatment. Too often Bible study is a gathering together of all possible material, exegetical, critical, archæological, theological, so long as it has some reference to the Bible. The interest of this series is vital. Its primary concern is religious, that is, with the way in which these records bear on human faith and life, and with the light which they throw upon this story of the making of a new humanity. Here lies the supreme meaning of the Bible. And this is history in the true sense, not the in-

discriminate record of past occurrence, but the study of that which lives on in our institutions and ideas to-day.

This interest governs us in our study of the teachings of Jesus. Our task is first of all historical in the narrower sense, namely, to understand the message of Jesus in the setting of his time and in that succession in which he came. Critical results need to be utilized, even where critical processes are not set forth. The ever-present danger must be avoided of making Jesus speak as a "modern," whether liberal or conservative, theologian or social reformer. Nor are we to extort answers to questions which Jesus never considered. But when we have agreed upon the need of this strict historical method, then there are other interests still to be weighed. We study the teachings of Jesus because he has given the supreme answer to man's deepest questions. Our question is, What were the great truths that formed his faith? What was that message which with increasing power has commanded the conscience and convictions of men even to our day?

A *Life of Jesus,* by the same author, has been issued as a companion volume. It should be at hand for reference or for collateral reading. The message of Jesus and his life must be studied together if either is to be rightly understood.

HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

At the close of each chapter the student will find Directions for Study. Look at these before beginning the reading of the chapter. A few general suggestions are here given.

First, get a clear idea of the purpose of the book. Back of it lies a twofold conviction: that Jesus had a message for men, clear and definite, and answering the great questions of life; and that this message of Jesus has been one of the great forces in human history that has wrought for the coming of the kingdom of God. This suggests the double interest of this book: What did Jesus teach, and what has his teaching meant for human faith and life?

In order to understand the teachings of Jesus, they must first of all be closely related to his life and times. Read and refer to the *Life of Jesus* issued as a companion to this volume.

While the individual subjects are separately studied, remember that the teachings of Jesus are not a string of opinions or a collection of doctrines. His words have a living source and a common center: his life with God and his conception of God.

As you begin the study of a chapter, read carefully the introductory paragraph which usually makes the connection with what precedes and gives the new theme. Then read the chapter through at a sitting and grasp its outline as a whole, joining it to what has gone before.

Now go over it again more carefully. Read the Bible references in the Directions for Study and in the text. These form the real subject for study. Form your own conclusions on the basis of the Gospels themselves.

Answer carefully the questions raised in the Directions for Study, writing the answers out if possible.

Write, and write constantly. Keep a special notebook for this study. Write in it the answers to all questions. A most helpful plan is to write an outline of each chapter, or to sum up its argument in your own words. Write out the ideas suggested to you by the Gospels or by the discussion. Nothing is more helpful to the student than constant writing, especially if studying alone. It compels more thorough work, it clarifies the thought and tests our knowledge, and it fixes in mind what we have learned.

Ask yourself constantly what this all means for yourself and for the life of the world about you. To do so will not only bring profit to yourself, but meaning and zest to all your study.

CHAPTER I

JESUS THE TEACHER

The Kingdom and the Bible

One of the great Christian ideas which is taking hold of the thought of our day is that of the kingdom of God. Set by Jesus in the forefront of his teaching, neglected in later years or limited in its meaning, we have come more and more to see its significance. It has given to us a Christian view of history. Humanity's story is no unmeaning tangle of events, nor is the world a mere machine that blindly grinds us all at last to dust. All this would give us happenings, not history. We have history only when events have a meaning, when there is movement toward a goal. For Christian thought God is the moving force, and the final goal is that rule of truth and right and peace which will bring man's highest life and which we call the kingdom (or kingship) of God.

If this, then, be our thought, that God is in his world working out such ends, then it will affect definitely our conception of the Bible and our mode of study. The Bible is not a book apart from the world, not so many words dropped down out of the sky. It is the evidence of this work of God in the world; it is the fruit of that higher life of men which has been wrought by his Spirit. Back of the Bible lies this great movement which we call the development of the Kingdom. Out of this movement the Bible has come, and of that movement it is the witness.

Dynamic Study of the Bible.—All this suggests a certain mode of Bible study. It is not enough to ask what a certain Bible verse means. It is not enough to ask when and by whom a book was written, what facts it contains, or what doctrines it teaches. We need a dynamic study of the Bible. These events that are recorded, what do they mean for this movement of the kingdom of God? These teach-

ings, how do they witness to the growing truth and the clearer light which God is giving to men? This life of prophet and people, is it the life of God that is to make at length the new world? This book is one of a series in which the Old Testament and the New are studied from this standpoint. In a companion volume the life of Jesus is presented. In this we study the teachings of Jesus. We want to know just what message Jesus brought to men, what he had to say about the great questions of God and our life here and our future, and what this message has meant for the growth of the kingdom of God. Here is the heart of all Bible study, for in Jesus we have the clearest word that God ever spoke to men and the greatest deed that God ever wrought for men.

The Place of Christ

The Return to Christ.—The return to Christ has been one of the great religious movements of our age. Never before have the life and words of Jesus been studied with such care and interest. The volumes which present these themes are numbered by the thousands, and of all these books hardly a single one had been written a hundred years ago. To-day, as never before, we see that Christianity means Jesus Christ. Other things have their place—the church, the creeds, the forms; but Christ stands supreme, and all the rest must constantly be measured and tested by him. This has not always been so. Christian men have always put Christ's name first, but in practice, when men asked what Christianity really was, frequently something else came in between. Sometimes it was the church, sometimes a creed, sometimes the letter of the Bible.

His Supreme Authority.—We know to-day that there can be only one final authority for us, and that is the mind of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. The church has authority only so far as it is filled with the Spirit of Christ and is doing his will. The creeds have authority just so far as they set forth the truth that is in Christ. And the Bible itself must be used with constant reference to Christ.

The authority of the Bible does not lie in its letter. We cannot pick out passages here and there as we will. Here too Christ is the final standard. When he rules out the ancient law of divorce, it must fall, even though it stands in the Bible. If his spirit condemns the morals of Judges or Joshua, then we cannot defend them. More important, however, is this: the study of Jesus shows us that the Bible represents not a dead letter but a living movement. What we see is not so much the imperfection of the Old Testament as its preparation for the New.

This, then, is the reason why we give special study to the message of Jesus, a message which he gave to us in his spirit and life as well as in his words. Here is God's full and final answer to the cry of man. The great philosopher Kant once said that all the questions of men might be summed up in these three queries: "What can I know?" "What must I do?" "What may I hope for?" Christ is the answer to all three. We cry: "What may I know? What is the meaning of this world? What is the power back of it? What is my life?" Jesus answers all with one word, "Our Father." His love and his power are the key to all. We ask: "What must I do? What shall be the rule of my life? What do I owe to others?" Again the answer is with Jesus: "That you may be children of your Father." To show the spirit of the Father in our life with our brothers, that is all. "What may I hope for?" we ask again. "What shall be the end of human life and strife on this globe? And what of the single human life? If a man die, shall he live again?" Again Jesus answers all with one phrase: "The kingdom of God." This heavenly Father is to rule; that means the kingdom of righteousness here, that means the eternal kingdom beyond, that means life for us now, that means life to come.

The Place of Teaching in Jesus' Work

His Constant Task.—"And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." It was thus, as a teacher, that

Jesus began his work. And that is what we see as we follow him month after month; he is ever teaching. Now he stands in the Nazareth synagogue or in the magnificent temple court at Jerusalem, now by the side of the lake where the pressing throngs crowd him into a boat. Now it is on the road as he walks with his friends, again at the table where he has been bidden as guest. Sometimes it is to crowds that fill the house and overflow into the street, or that cover the hillside; again it is to one woman by the wayside, one visitor at night, or a few mothers in the market place. Always he is teaching, talking to men about the Kingdom, showing men God and the life of his sons. Sometimes it is to idle throngs that listen and turn away, sometimes to wondering crowds that hang upon his words, again to scowling priests or the crafty pupils of the scribes who are waiting to entrap him, again it is to his beloved companions. He takes weeks and months just to teach that last little group. His last days are spent, in the midst of imminent peril, in teaching; and when he leaves the temple for the last time and goes to the sacred upper room with the twelve, it is to use those last precious hours to give one more lesson to his followers.

The Meaning of Teaching.—It is plain that this work of Jesus meant far more than what usually passes under the name of teaching. It was no mere giving of information or training of the intellect. Education is the giving of self and the training of the whole spirit of a man. "The teacher is the life-sharer," writes a modern educator. "The educational process at bottom is the sharing of life." The work of Jesus is the best commentary on this statement. It is a mistaken conception of teaching which causes some people in the church to oppose regeneration to education and to insist that we need more of the Holy Spirit and less of religious culture. Jesus makes plain two facts concerning religious education: first, the great instrument of God's Spirit is the truth; the truth is what God uses to win men and to make men. Second, that truth must be in the life of the teacher that it may bring forth life in the learner. When Phillips Brooks defined preaching as "truth through

personality," he told what true teaching was. We do not wonder then that the great leaders in the Christian Church, a Paul, an Augustine, a Luther, and a Wesley, were above all else teachers.

The Teacher's Creed

A Parable for a Teacher.—The Parable of the Sower might be called the teacher's creed. I doubt not it was spoken some time when the disciples were discouraged at the slow progress that was being made. It seemed so slow, so futile, just to go from village to village, talking to folks, explaining, inviting. The crowds that followed one day melted away the next. To do some great miracle, to command a great following, that would have seemed to them worth while. And so Jesus told them the story of the sower (Mark 4. 1-9). "I am a sower," he said to them. "There are some souls on whom my words fall, that are like the beaten ground where no seed can take root. Then there are folks who accept the truth at once, but have no depth of understanding or purpose; they shout to-day, but forget to-morrow. They are like that place in the field where a little soil covers the rock, where the wheat springs up quickly only to wither away. And there are the divided souls. They are interested in my words, but they have other interests, too, roots of selfishness and sin that are in them; and these other interests crowd out what I say. All this I see, but I see something more. I see the good soil, the simple earnest folks who take my words into honest hearts. And I know the seed: it has life in it. I know the power of the truth: and I know that it will bring forth thirty, sixty, a hundredfold."

Jesus' Trust in the Truth and in Men.—This was Jesus' creed as a teacher. He believed in the truth and its power. He flung it forth with prodigal hand and without fear as to results. It might grow slowly, but it had the life of God in it. And this truth was his trust. He did not organize a church or write a creed. He did not try to win the help of the people of influence, the scribes and priests. He simply went forth to sow.

He believed not only in the seed that he sowed, but also in the soil. Nothing is more wonderful than his confidence that men could receive his truth and rise to the higher life that he proclaimed. He set that truth before all kinds of folks: the reprobate taxgatherer, the outcast woman, the narrow Pharisee, the man of the crowd, the thief on the cross. And this faith of the teacher was not more astonishing than the results that followed. Buried aspirations sprang up at his touch. Men rose to walk in newness of life, to be the men that he saw they might be. When Christian missions have taken the highest ideals to pagan Africans and Fijian cannibals and debased Tierra del Fuegians, as well as to the down-and-out of the great city, they have simply shown this faith of their Master.

Jesus' Originality and Independence

What impressed the hearers of Jesus first of all was his independence. It was in such absolute contrast to the scribes, who were the professional theologians and acknowledged authorities. The test of a scribe was his knowledge of what others had said, his great duty was to remember the traditions of the past. Jesus "taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." This independence of Jesus is seen in his life. He knew himself as Messiah, and yet he went contrary to everything that men looked for in that figure. They looked for one to come in glory; he took the way of a servant. They thought of a king; he became a humble wandering preacher. They expected one who would convince people by his miraculous power; Jesus refused to work wonders simply to astonish or win men. This young Galilæan, a peasant from a petty village, set himself against all the leaders of theology and the rulers of the church. He had to oppose, indeed, even his own family and friends and townspeople. And all this was done among a people which reverenced authority and worshiped tradition to a degree probably nowhere practiced in the world to-day.

The Old Testament in Jesus' Life.—Did not Jesus recog-

nize one authority at least—that of the Old Testament? As we study Jesus' relation to the Old Testament, we are struck first by his deep reverence for it, and then by the constant use that he makes of it. In these pages he found God's presence, God's word to his people of old, and God's word for himself. He does not claim to come with any new religion; it is the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob that he proclaims (Mark 12. 26). He censures the scribes not for following the Scriptures, but for making void its words by their traditions (Mark 7. 6-13). He answers his enemies with words from its pages, and his speech is full of Old Testament phrases and allusions. The place of the Bible is even greater in his life than in his teaching. It gives him wisdom and a weapon in his first temptation. It gives him light when he seeks the Father's will for his life; Isaiah's passages about the servant confirm him in the way of service and suffering that he has chosen. And in the last dread agony, it is the words of one of the psalms that are caught from his lips by those that stand near the cross.

Jesus' Discrimination.—And yet even here we see the independence of Jesus. It appears in the way in which Jesus selects from the Old Testament. He not only uses, but he passes by. He chooses that which is congruous with his own spirit and message: not the legal and ceremonial, but the moral and spiritual. His quotations are mainly from the Psalms and prophetic books, and from books of prophetic spirit like Deuteronomy. Especially significant is his use of the Messianic passages. Most of the Messianic passages do not seem to have influenced him at all, especially those that speak of the Messiah's glory and his destruction of his foes (see, for example, Psalm 2; Isaiah 11. 4). He read Isaiah 61. 1, 2 in the Nazareth synagogue, but stopped in the midst of the sentence before the words, "the day of vengeance of our God." The passage that influenced him most, it would seem, was one which none of the Jewish scholars of his day, so far as we know, had thought of referring to the Messiah, namely, the passage of the suffering servant (Isaiah 52. 13 to 53. 12).

His Claim to Higher Authority.—But Jesus does more than select: he sets his own authority definitely above the Old Testament. Some of its rules he disregarded. Despite Leviticus 13 and 15, he did not shun or send away the leper and the woman with an issue of blood. Likewise he sets himself above the Sabbath law (Mark 2. 28). Other laws he specifically corrects or abrogates. The Old Testament asserted the principle of retaliation (Exodus 21. 24; Leviticus 24. 19, 20; Deuteronomy 19. 21); he swept this aside and proclaimed the sole law of love. He puts aside the Mosaic law of divorce (Mark 10. 2-12, as against Deuteronomy 24. 1). The Old Testament made provision for oaths; he forbade them (Matthew 5. 34). Most significant is what Jesus said when they accused his disciples of eating with unwashed hands (Mark 7. 14-23). First he showed how the Pharisees were defeating the law by their rules. Then he went further and laid down the principle: what comes out of a man defiles him, not what goes in. His meaning is perfectly clear. A man is not made evil by material things, whether by the food he eats or the objects he touches. It is only moral things that make him evil, the things within his own heart. It is not merely the rules of the scribes that Jesus corrects here, but all that Levitical law which makes defilement a physical instead of a moral matter (Leviticus 11 to 15).

The Ground of Jesus' Authority

A Unique Relation.—How is it that Jesus assumes such authority? There are two reasons, though at bottom these are one. First, Jesus is conscious of a unique relation to his Father. "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Matthew 11. 27). He was not one Teacher among others; he was the Teacher, the Master (Matthew 23. 8, 10). He was one among many brethren, and yet he was the Son in a special sense. God speaks to him through the Old Testament, but

he is not dependent upon this. The Father speaks to him; the Father's Spirit and the Father's will are in his own heart. He does not ask, therefore, what others have taught or what is written. He speaks directly out of his own heart; and so sure is he that he even challenges at times those sacred writings of his people in which he himself had been reared. But what he says thus from his own heart goes straight with conviction to the hearts of others.

A Unique Mission.—Second, Jesus is conscious of a special mission in the world. He is the Messiah; he is the beginning of a new day, the founder of the Kingdom. That does not mean that Jesus thought of himself as a revolutionary. He says of himself that he is a fulfiller, not a destroyer (Matthew 5. 17). He recognizes God's work in all that has gone before. But the new cannot be hampered and held by the old. It may keep the old truth, but it must make its own forms. The old wine skins will no longer do; you cannot use the new cloth simply to patch up the old clothes (Matthew 9. 16, 17). Long ago the prophet had looked forward to a new day, when religion should be an inner spirit and power in men's lives, and not a set of laws above them (Jeremiah 31. 31-34). Jesus knew that he had brought that day and that covenant (Luke 22. 20). The new religion of the spirit could not be bound by the old form or the old letter. And so Jesus puts them aside. What Jesus here asserted Paul fought for later on when he denounced those who insisted that Christians must keep the old forms like circumcision, and the old days like the Jewish Sabbath (Galatians 5. 6; Colossians 2. 16, 17).

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Mark 4. 1-9; Matthew 7. 28, 29; Mark 12. 26, 29-31; 10. 2-12; Matthew 5. 38, 39; Mark 7. 14-23; 2. 18-22.

Review in your own mind the life of Christ, and make a list of all the scenes that you can recall in which Jesus appears as teacher. Follow this by reading the first sections of this chapter.

Read "The Teacher's Creed" and the parable of Mark 4. 1-9. Consider the emphasis which Luther, Wesley, and other great

leaders have placed upon teaching and preaching. What does this parable mean for the student?

Read the sections on Jesus' originality and his attitude toward the Old Testament, looking up all the references.

Discuss the Christian use of the Old Testament suggested by this chapter.

CHAPTER II

JESUS' METHOD AS TEACHER

THERE are two reasons why we wish to study Jesus' method as a teacher. We should like, first of all, to learn the secret of his success. Here is one whose work covered but a few months, or at most a few years. He penned no line, nor arranged for others to write down what he said. And yet his words, flung upon the air, have lived on imperishable; their light has guided the faith of men, and their power has transformed human life and history. Second, we must study the method of his teaching in order to interpret his words rightly. Few teachers have been so often misunderstood, and this has been largely because men did not understand his way of teaching.

THE CHARACTER OF HIS TEACHING

He Sets Forth No System.—The ordinary teacher has a more or less complete system of ideas which he sets forth in order one after the other. That was not the method of Jesus. He gave to men a wonderful revelation of God; but he never said to his disciples, "Now I will tell you about the doctrine of God and prove his being and describe his attributes." He taught simply as the occasion demanded. His great messages were called forth by the need of the hour or suggested by some incident of the way. He sees a dead sparrow and makes it a text from which to preach on God's might and God's care; not even that sparrow can fall without your Father, he says. He is criticized for associating with sinners; his answer is the story of the prodigal son with its revelation of a God of mercy. A woman by a wayside well calls forth the message about worshiping in

spirit and in truth. The effort of disciples to keep some little children away brought out the great truth that the kingdom of God belongs only to the childlike.

He Is Interested in Life, Not Theory.—Too often the interest of the church has been in doctrine for its own sake; to have correct beliefs was considered the most important matter in religion. Jesus cared for men and not for ideas. The truth that he cared about was truth that would make for life. That is why there are so many subjects about which he did not speak. His silence here means as much as his speech. When men brought him matters of dispute or curious theory, he always turned them to something vital. These men whom Pilate killed, they asked him, were they sinners above others? That is an idle question, says Jesus: here is something more important: If you do not repent, you will all likewise perish (Luke 13. 1-5).

He Sees Eternal Truth in Common Things.—Although Jesus' teaching is practical, it is not shallow; he deals with common needs and common duties, but he lifts them up to the plane of the eternal. It is the common life in which he is interested: how to love and help folks, how to be a good neighbor, how to have peace and joy. But he brings heaven itself down to light up these common things. He tells those that clothe the naked and visit the prisoner that they are doing it to the Christ himself. Loving your enemy, he says, is nothing less than being a son of the Most High God. And the peace that he gave men was to come because they saw God himself in their world and in all their life.

His Knowledge of Men.—And this teacher knew men; that was another secret of his power. He had not been brought up apart in some king's palace. He had lived the common life. He knew what hard work was. As the eldest son of a widowed mother, he knew what it meant to plan and provide. He knew the burdens and sorrows of common folks. He knew their sins: their shallowness and selfishness, their love of wealth, their pride, their worry. He knew the nobler part that was in them, the higher possibilities that lay buried under sin. He knew the man that

might be, as well as the man that was, and his faith in the better man became a power in such men's lives. Other men, as well as he, saw Levi, the despised taxgatherer; he alone saw Matthew, the apostle and evangelist.

Teaching by Pictures

Its Value and Power.—Jesus' teaching was picture-teaching, and a large part of its simplicity and power lies here. Modern education knows the value of the appeal to the eye, and the "movies" show how popular such an appeal is. Nowhere is the picture more needed than in teaching spiritual truths. It holds the indifferent man, it convinces the unwilling, and it makes the simplest and dullest to see. And never was one who used pictures like Jesus. He took the familiar things of common life, bird and beast, grain and weed and flower, salt and seed and candle, men at work and children at play; but these common things he made to speak to men of all the high truths of heaven and earth.

We note the simplicity and clearness of the teaching. Men were afraid to trust God, he was so holy and so far off. Jesus took his picture from the most familiar experiences of life. He put that picture into one word, and into that word he packed a whole creed. He bade men say, "Father," and in that word gave them a new faith. He found men burdened with anxiety and fear; he said, "Consider the lilies." He saw them scrupulous about the rules of religion, but hard and selfish at heart; he said, "You must be children of your Father."

But simple as Jesus' teaching is, his phrases are crowded with meaning. Single phrases have whole sermons in them, driven home in unforgetable pictures. It was a customary form of Jewish teaching, as was the parable, but used by none other as by Jesus. These sermons in a phrase have become part of our common speech: a house divided against itself, wolves in sheep's clothing, counting the cost, grapes from thorns, whited sepulchers, the first shall be last, salt of the earth.

The Poetry of Jesus.—A separate lesson might well be

given to the study of Jesus as poet. It was not, of course, the poetry of labored effort, but the speech of a soul that, itself filled with beauty as with truth, saw all things truly and spoke all things well. Not even the translation from Aramaic to Greek, and again from Greek to English, can hide from us this form. Jesus' parables are like pictures. There is perfect composition, no line out of place. There is the frugality of the artist; not a word can be spared, nor need another word be added. Each phrase, each picture, has a certain finality. We feel that this has been said once for all; hereafter we can only repeat. And so we do not wonder that these phrases have passed over into the common speech of all lands and ages.

Hebrew poetry did not use rime and did not depend upon meter as commonly with us. In this respect it was more like the modern *vers libre*. Its special mark is parallelism. Line is placed by line, sometimes repeating the thought, sometimes contrasting, but always so that these lines together form a whole. The psalms give the best examples. To this form of poetry the speech of Jesus rises again and again. Here, for example, is the close of the Sermon on the Mount. The parable forms two stanzas. In each of these, two longer lines state the theme, four short lines follow, with a long line in conclusion. The strong line that closes the first stanza is like the rock upon which the house rests; the last line of the second stanza is like the solemn tolling of a funeral bell.

"Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them,
Shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock:
And the rain descended,
And the floods came,
And the winds blew,
And beat upon that house;
And it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock.

And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not,

Shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house
upon the sand:
And the rain descended,
And the floods came,
And the winds blew,
And smote upon that house;
And it fell: and great was the fall thereof."

The Sermon on the Mount is rich in such passages. Note especially the beatitudes, and the whole passage about the single heart and the single trust (Matthew 6. 19-34). Here noble thought is fitted with speech as beautiful as it is simple, while over all is the atmosphere of Christ's own peace. The first half of Matthew 7 is entirely composed of passages cast in the Hebrew poetic form. In none of this is there the sign of labor. It is merely the beauty of form instinctively chosen for pure and noble thought.

The Parables

What is a Parable?—Most of the pictures that we have spoken of so far are simple likenesses. The parable is another form of Jesus' picture-teaching, and one that demands special attention. The parable is an invented story, like the fable or the allegory. It differs from the fable in being a story that might naturally happen. The parables have no talking animals, for example, like the fables of Æsop. Even more important is the difference from the allegory. A parable, like an allegory, is a story used to prove or illustrate some spiritual meaning. In an allegory, however, like the Pilgrim's Progress, each figure and incident has its special meaning, and one must ask continually, what does this mean? and what is that? The parable, on the other hand, is an argument intended to prove one central point. Other points may suggest a comparison, but the real point of the parable is one.

Some Difficult Parables.—Many of the difficulties in the parables will disappear if we realize this, that they are arguments meant to prove one point. Here is the unrighteous steward (Luke 16. 1-12). Jesus does not commend his

sharp practices. The parable has just one point: let the disciples be as efficient in the affairs of the Kingdom as this man was in his own selfish interest. There is just one point in the parable of the eleventh-hour laborers (Matthew 20. 1-16). We are not servants in a market place waiting to be hired. God is not a mere master dealing with his workmen. Nor does Jesus teach that men should get equal wages whether they work one hour or twelve. God is like the Lord of the vineyard in just one thing: he gives, and does not simply pay. He deals with men not after their desert, but according to his grace.

The Parable of the Forgiving Father.—None of the parables of Jesus is better known than that of the prodigal son. Its theme is that eternal one of a boy's waywardness and a father's love. It should be called the parable of the forgiving father. Jesus did not tell it in order to picture human sin and its consequence, though it does that wonderfully. The story is his argument in answer to the criticism of his foes (Luke 15. 1, 2, 11-24). They had criticized him bitterly for associating with the taxgatherers and other religious outcasts, or "sinners"; he was violating the law, overturning all order, and actually encouraging unrighteousness. So Jesus tells them the story of this father and his boy. Just where his story was leading them his hearers probably did not see. But even the Pharisees must have been moved as they saw the old man, worn with his waiting, at last catch sight of the boy far down the road and run out to meet him. He forgets the boy's rags and filth and even his sin, nor does he mind what the neighbors say. He has won back his boy, and that is enough. God is like that, says Jesus. His rule is mercy and his joy is in winning back his wayward children.

The Examples

Four Examples.—Four of Jesus' stories usually classed with the parables may better be called examples. They are those of the good Samaritan, the Pharisee and publican in the temple, the foolish rich man, and Dives and Lazarus.

What we have in each case is an impressive illustration setting forth a great spiritual truth. And how effective these examples are! Men who cannot understand a discussion of justification through faith, look at the Pharisee and publican, and see that God's one concern when men come to him is the penitent and humble heart. The rich farmer, standing with poor and naked soul before God, shows us in a flash the folly and failure of what men call wisdom and success.

The Good Samaritan.—It was the question of a quibbling lawyer that called forth the story of the good Samaritan. In answer to an earlier question, Jesus had declared that the heart of all religion was the simple law of love. What God wanted, in other words, was just being a neighbor. And now he shows us in a picture what being a neighbor means. A poor traveler had been plundered and beaten on that robber-infested road between Jerusalem and Jericho. Priest and Levite passed him by, religious men who did not know what real religion was. The Samaritan may have had his natural prejudice against this Jew, but what he saw now was not a Jew, but only a brother in need, his neighbor, no matter how far they were separated in home and in race. To have a heart of love for all men and to show it to the man in need, that is religion. And through all ages, as men think of this, there will stand before them this Samaritan.

The Misuse of Jesus' Teaching

Allegorizing.—Three mistakes are often made in connection with the teaching of Jesus. The first is that of allegorizing. Men have not been content to take the single simple point of the parables, but have tried to find some hidden meaning in every part. So in the parable of the prodigal son men have found a meaning for the far country and the famine, the husks and the swine, the robe and the ring, the shoes and the calf, and many other matters. There is, of course, no agreement among such allegorizers, and no limit except the imagination of the individual, who reads into it his own particular doctrine or system. This

system flourishes in the Roman Catholic Church and in certain Protestant circles.

Literalism.—The second mistake is that of literalism. Jesus used vivid phrases to startle men and pictures to make them see. It was the method of the poet and prophet, and men have too often lost the meaning by turning it into dull prose. They declare we must be loyal to the word of Jesus and so take it letter by letter. But where is the Christian who hates his father and mother (Luke 14. 26), who cuts off his right hand, or plucks out his right eye? (Matthew 5. 29, 30.) And what shall we do when he tells us at one time to let our light shine before men, and a little later that we are not to let the right hand know what the left hand does? Or again when he says, "Peace I leave with you," and then, "I came not to send peace, but a sword?" Jesus' teaching has made literalism impossible for those who will really study it. It is the spirit that Jesus cares for in our life, and it is the spirit that we must discern in his teaching.

Legalism.—The final mistake is that of legalism, or the effort to turn Jesus' teaching into a new system of laws. But it was not rules that Jesus came to bring, but life. Jesus' idea of religion was not a better set of laws, but a new spirit in the hearts of men. All this becomes plain when we look at his teachings. There is no effort to set forth any system of laws; rather he is like the wise physician, prescribing this for one patient and that for another. To the rich young ruler he says, "Sell all which thou hast"; but he does not require this of Zacchæus. One man he tells to leave all and follow; but the Gadarene demoniac he sends back to his people. Systems of law come and go, like systems of theology; they must be suited to conditions and times. But the message of Jesus is eternal; to every age he says, "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life."

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Luke 13. 1-5; Matthew 13. 34; 5. 13-16; Luke 10. 29-37; 15. 11-24.

This lesson is mostly concerned with Jesus' picture-teaching. Read carefully the discussion. It is most important, however, to read as fully as possible in the Gospels themselves, testing for yourself every point made in this chapter.

Write out from memory as long a list as you can of the objects used by Jesus for illustration, including the parables.

Make as long a list as you can of the parables from memory.

Select two of these parables and give the meaning.

Recall some of the doctrines in regard to which Christian people have disputed and Christian churches divided. Are any of these discussed by Jesus?

What do you consider the most beautiful of the parables or other messages of Jesus?

CHAPTER III

THE FATHER

The heart of a man's faith is what he thinks about God; from this everything else follows. That is true of Jesus; once grasp his simple but wonderful thought of God and all his teachings become plain. The men of his day thought him dangerous because he put aside rule and ritual and simply bade men love; but that was because he believed in such a God. When he urged men to pray and not faint, when he bade them face the world without fear, it was because he believed in a God who cared for all men and who ruled all the world. Only one chapter is given here to the special theme of Jesus' teaching about God, but that truth in fact will underlie the whole course. Indeed, we have here the test of all Christian teaching: Does it agree with the character of God as Jesus revealed him in his life and word?

The Idea of God in Israel

In Jesus' Day.—The highest gift that life can bestow on us is a warm, strong faith in God. That was the need of the men of Jesus' day. There was a great deal of religion but not much of God, and so there was not much love or peace or strength. Religion was a round of hard duties, a task rather than an inspiration. The world was very near and very real. Men loved it and feared it, and the love of the world and the fear of the world alike kept them in bondage. God himself seemed far away. They knew that he had once been with his people, that he had led them forth from Egypt and given them their land. Some time in the future they expected to see his power again. Meanwhile he had left men his laws. Religion was not fellowship with God, but the study and keeping of these laws.

The God of the Prophets.—Far richer and stronger had been the faith of the prophets. "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah," so the creed began. These prophets believed in one God. He was the Creator; he had "measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span." He was the God of history as well as of nature; he it was who had called forth a Cyrus, "to subdue nations before him." He was a God of mercy toward his people, "a just God and a Saviour." "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." He was a God of righteousness, this God of the prophets; his concern was not for sacrifices and offerings, but that "justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

The God of Jesus

Jesus and the Prophets.—All this living faith of the prophets we find again in the message of Jesus. God was a living presence. Jesus saw the hard, wicked world as clearly as anyone—more clearly, indeed, than others. But it was a different world for him because in all and above all he saw God. The glowing sky, the sudden tempest, the wayside flower, the little birds, all spoke to him of God. It was the vision of God that had made the prophets; their work began when they "saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." But Jesus saw this Lord not merely in the glory of the temple, but in all the world's life. He was not merely the God before whom the flaming spirits cried, "Holy, holy, holy," he was the God near at hand to help even the little child, and without whom not even the sparrow fell.

The King Is Father

There are two phrases in which we may sum up Jesus' teaching about God, and the first is this: The King is Father. With that thought he begins the prayer that he taught his disciples: "Our Father who art in heaven." He who is in heaven, who rules over all, is Father.

Fatherhood in the Old Testament.—This message of God's Fatherhood is Jesus' first great advance over all that went before. It is true that Jehovah is sometimes called Father in the Old Testament, but we see the difference when we look more closely. In the Old Testament God is first of all a King. True, this King is fatherly toward his people; he pities those that fear him as a father pities his children; but his real character is that of king. The real faith of a people comes to expression in its hymns and prayers. Where is there a Christian that does not say "Father" when he prays? But in the psalms, the Old Testament prayer book, you look in vain for a single passage where the worshiper calls upon Jehovah as Father. (Psalm 103. 13; 68. 5; 89. 27, 28 are only apparent exceptions.) There is one other notable fact: with perhaps one exception, when Jehovah is spoken of as Father in the Old Testament, it is in relation to the people as a whole or to their representative, the king. The common man did not think of God as his own Father.

The God of Mercy.—What does this Fatherhood mean? First of all it means undeserved mercy. The religion of the law is the religion that earns: men get just what they deserve. So Judaism thought; God was a lawgiver and an even-handed judge. There was a double danger under such teaching: that the "sinner" should give up everything in despair, and that the "saint" should become proud and self-righteous. For all this there is no room with Jesus. God is not a taskmaster paying wages: he is the Father whose mercy goes out to all his children. It is what God is that determines his gifts to men, not what men are. And not all the evil of men can change God's love. That is the message of Matthew 5. 43-48. Jesus had noted the hard ways of men, which they called justice. That is not God's way, he said. Look out upon this world. His sun shines upon the evil and the good; his gracious rain falls upon the just and the unjust.

But it is the parable of the eleventh-hour laborers that gives the death-blow to this Jewish idea of a bargain religion and a God who is merely a paymaster (Matthew 20.

1-16). A certain landowner sends his steward into the market place of the village to hire laborers, and the agreement is that each shall receive a denarius, or about seventeen cents. During the day he hires still other men, some, indeed, only an hour before the day's close. The master himself pays off the men. He begins with those last hired, who, to their surprise, receive their denarius, though they have worked but an hour. But when the master comes to those who have worked all day, he gives them the same. To their protest he answers: "Cannot I do what I will with my own? Are you to be angry because I am good, because I choose to give to these men more than they have earned?"

This parable is an argument, and it seeks to prove one point: God deals with men on the principle of mercy, not of hard justice. With this parable Jesus swept away the whole religion of law and labor, of earning and getting. God is not that kind of a God. With this word Jesus gave a new hope to the hopeless, and drew sinners and outcasts to himself. The old theologians used to say that God must always be just, that he might when he would be merciful; but they were not true in this to the teaching of Jesus. God is Father, and mercy is the law of fatherhood. God will always be merciful, as he will ever be just.

An Individual Love.—This is one side of Fatherhood, an unbounded and undeserved love for all men. The other side is this: God loves men individually. His Fatherhood is not a general good will. It is not his love for mankind as a whole, or for some race, or for his church. He cares for each single man, as the shepherd does for the single sheep that may be astray. The humblest child is precious in his sight; woe to him who makes one such child to stumble! God has his loving purpose for every human life. There is not one thing that concerns a man that God is not interested in; the hairs of your head are numbered (Matthew 10. 29-31). But if God be such a God, loving each man, then religion is man answering that love with like love. It is man entering into fellowship with the Father as a true son, loving him, talking with him, making God's will the great concern of his life. And so religion

becomes a personal relation. "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God."

Three Great Truths.—Here, then, are three great truths that flow from Jesus' teaching about the Father. (1) Individualism: God knows the single man, and cares for him. (2) Universalism: if God cares for each man, then he cares for all men. He is not limited to one nation, whether Jew or Anglo-Saxon, nor to certain elect. (3) Religion becomes a personal relation: the rule of God is to be carried out in family and industry and state, but the heart of it all is man's fellowship with God. Confessing the creed, performing the rite, belonging to the nation or the church, none of these can take the place of this personal relation of the child with the Father.

The Father Is King

Love Upon the Throne.—The Father is King; that is the second phrase in which to sum up Jesus' teaching about God. It is not enough for men to believe in the love of God. Does this love sit upon the world's throne, or is there another power that men must fear? That was the weakness in men's faith in Jesus' day, as it is in ours; men feared and loved other things besides God. Back of Jesus' joyous message about the Father was the abiding assurance of his Father's power. It is easy to say, as we do each Sunday, "I believe in God the Father Almighty;" but do we really believe that the Power Almighty is a Father, and that our Father is Almighty Power? So Jesus believed. There was evil in the world, but God would surely carry out his purpose for each individual and for his world. So Jesus rejoiced not merely in God's love but in his power. He says: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."

The Fear of God.—If the Father is really King, then we must fear him. In his own strong word Jesus puts the truth: "I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body. . . . But I will warn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, who after he hath killed hath power

to cast into hell" (Luke 12. 4, 5; compare Matthew 10. 28). This is not, of course, fear in the ordinary human sense. It has, rather, the meaning of reverence and awe. It belongs not simply to the sinner, but to the saint who utterly trusts and loves. It was in Jesus' own soul. It is awakened as much by the thought of God's infinite and holy love as by the thought of his power. To such reverence and awe Jesus summoned men. They were to pray, "Hallowed be thy name." They were not to swear at all. The trifling Sadducees with their frivolous question he rebukes with the word: "Ye know not . . . the power of God."

The Source of Strength and Peace.—Such reverential fear is the foundation of strong character. The reason is plain. (1) The fear of God and obedience to his will give men purpose in life and power. Life gains unity. Lesser aims and petty interests lose their influence. Man is strong because he has a great and commanding end. (2) The fear of God delivers a man from all other fears. Fear and trust belong together, as Jesus showed. He begins by saying, "Fear him"; he ends with the words, "Fear not" (Matthew 10. 28, 31). It is the fear of God that delivers us from all other fears. The great reason why men are so anxious and worried is because they have not had the real vision of God's power.

Superstition and Worry.—Worry was not simply a failing in the eyes of Jesus; it was a sin. The heart of worry is an unwillingness to trust God or to leave our lives to his will. The root of worry is paganism, an unbelief in God, perhaps more often a belief that God rules but part of the world, while the rest belongs to chance or powers of evil. Closely allied to this are the lingering superstitions that may be found even in our day. What is the meaning of the little superstitions about lucky pennies, the number thirteen, knocking on wood, and picking up pins for good luck? Is it not the feeling that at least a part of this world is not under the rule of God and his ordered action, but of some "chance" or power of evil? How widespread this is, even among educated people, was shown some years ago

by a writer who declared that in response to personal queries nearly three fourths of the teaching force of Harvard University confessed that "they had little habits and customs indicating that, whether consciously or subconsciously, they were under superstition's influence." Of nearly nine hundred students examined in the University of California, one hundred and thirty-eight believed wholly or partly in the Friday superstition, and one hundred and thirty in the idea of misfortune associated with the number thirteen. A simple thoroughgoing faith in a power that is good and that rules absolutely all life is the highest gift that can come to a man, a gift that brings quiet of mind and strength and joy.

The Holiness of God

Holiness in Jesus' Day.—We have spoken of the love of God and the power of God, but thus far have not considered the holiness of God. It is significant that there is only one passage in which Jesus is reported as using the adjective "holy" with God (John 17. 11). Now, Jesus believed as strongly in the holiness of God as did those about him; but the reason that he and the early church used it so little seems to be that the word had acquired a meaning which they did not accept. It had come to mean something formal and ritual both for men and God. Holiness meant separation from defilement. In men it meant mainly a scrupulous observance of the many rules of ceremonial cleanness. One of the great requirements was to keep away from all "sinners," the contact with whom would defile. In a similar way, the holiness of God meant his separation from sinful men.

Love—Jesus' Ideal of Holiness.—It was a new and greater ideal of holiness that Jesus brought. It was the holiness of love, so wonderful, so pure, so boundless, as to transcend all that men had ever conceived. He himself exhibited that holiness in his life. It was not a holiness that separated from men, but one that drew near. Jesus prefers to use the name "love" for this rather than "holi-

ness"; it is, however, none the less holiness with which we are dealing when we speak of God's love. It is only necessary to see clearly what kind of love this Father love is which Jesus proclaimed.

Not all love is holy love. Sometimes love is unholy because it is impure, sometimes because it is foolish or weak. Such mistaken sentiment is often shown by parents and friends, and makes for moral harm and so for unrighteousness. The love of the Father, infinite and gracious and undeserved, is not the weak love of sentiment that men have sometimes thought it. It is a love that touches men to save men. Its least gifts go to all, the gifts of sun and rain. Its great gift, the gift of life, goes only to those who surrender themselves to it and enter the fellowship of God. But that fellowship is a moral fellowship. It demands obedience, it lifts a man from sin. It is God's way of overcoming evil. The greatest power for righteousness in this world is not the threat of the law; it is this mercy of God as the power to destroy sin. God's love is pure holiness.

The Idea of Love and the Sense of Sin.—One question more needs to be answered. With this place given to mercy as supreme in God, are we not sacrificing the sense of sin and the fact of judgment? To this we must answer emphatically, No! First of all, this teacher of love, this Christ of mercy, has done more to deepen the sense of sin than all proclaimers of law and punishment. Not till we have studied Jesus do we see what sin really is. It is not the breaking of some little rule. It is not the failure of some sacrifice. It is man standing out against the love of such a God. He may do that in various ways, as we see from the Gospels. He may refuse to receive that love. "How often would I have gathered you together," says Jesus, "and ye would not." He may show the hard, unloving, selfish spirit in his own life, as did those who criticized Jesus for receiving sinners; these Jesus portrayed in the little parable of the elder brother (Luke 15. 25-32). Or else there may be definite refusal of God's loving purpose, and a life of opposition, such as was seen in the

enmity to Jesus that culminated in the cross. In every case it is in the white light of God's love that we see the real blackness of sin.

Love and Judgment.—And there is place for judgment in this message of love. That follows from the very nature of the case. Such judgment is not torment which God inflicts upon the sinner; it is the sinner's own deed in shutting himself out from the love of God. If God's love meant merely the gift of health or other earthly good, it might be different; but it means a personal fellowship which God offers to man. From that personal fellowship man may shut himself out by selfishness and disobedience. And, though the love of God will follow him, we can see no reason why man may not shut himself out finally. If it be life eternal to know God, then such disobedience is death. Jesus himself does not discuss the doctrine of punishment and the future life, but he makes clear the principle of judgment. Sin has its consequences as well as righteousness. "These shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life."

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Matthew 5. 43-48; 6. 9; 20. 1-16; 10. 28-31.

Read carefully the first three Scripture references and the whole discussion of "The King is Father." Recall other sayings or parables in which Jesus brings out this doctrine. Going back to his life, recall how he illustrated it there.

Read the discussion of "The Father is King," and the last reference. Again refer to Jesus' life. Note his spirit of obedience, his reverence in prayer (Matthew 4. 4, 7, 10; 11. 25; 26. 39).

Study the unity of holiness and love. Here again it is the life and spirit of Jesus that will best show us, if we are perplexed, alike the unity of these two and the full meaning of each.

Discuss the following practical questions: The meaning of God's fatherhood for a man's faith and life; the meaning of God's holiness; how the idea of God's holiness suffers when we leave out his love; how the idea of love suffers when holiness is omitted.

CHAPTER IV

THE HIGHER RIGHTEOUSNESS

All the teaching of Jesus moves about two great words: Father and sons. And these two words suggest the double task of his life: to show to men the Father, to lead men into the life of sons. Along these simple lines our study of the teaching of Jesus will move. We are to consider what sonship is, how men are to live as sons in relation to the Father, to their brothers, and to the world. Then we take up some questions about the Father's rule (the kingdom of God); and in our closing lessons consider the Son, in his character as showing us true sonship, and in his teaching concerning himself. In this lesson we study the higher righteousness which must characterize the sons of the Kingdom.

Righteousness with the Jews

The idea of righteousness belongs to all higher religions. It is the life that is demanded of men. The righteousness of man is his accordance with the standard set by God. That was what lifted Israel's religion above that of the nations about her; her God demanded more than sacrifices, he asked for righteousness of life. And never in all the history of Israel was there such a determined and systematic effort to fulfill this righteousness as in Jesus' day. There was a group of experts, the scribes, who gave their whole life to the study and teaching of just what was demanded by way of righteousness. Their word was law to the people. And they were backed by a party which included the influential leaders of the people, the Pharisees, who stood for the strictest obedience to the law.

The Criticism of Jesus.—Jesus came with a new demand.

All this is not enough, he says. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." The reason for the criticism is not far to seek. First of all, these leaders had passed by the prophets, who gave the highest message of righteousness to be found in the Old Testament and upon whom Jesus constantly built. Second, when they took the law, they did not try to get at its inner spirit, but simply added more rules to the rules which they found, until all religion was simply a keeping of these rules.

The Failure of Legalism.—Such a religion could not but fail. The young man was probably quite sincere who said to Jesus, "All these things have I observed from my youth." He had lived up to his ideal, but his ideal was too low. On the other hand the keeping of rules cannot give life. Just as soon as some earnest Jew like Saul of Tarsus looked beyond the letter he found that he had, indeed, a commandment over him, but no power of life within. Instead, he found the war in his members, and could only cry, "Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" (Read Romans 7.)

An Inner Righteousness

Jesus' Demand for Higher Righteousness.—The theme of the Sermon on the Mount is the higher righteousness of the Kingdom as contrasted with the righteousness of the scribes. Men sometimes think of Jesus as offering the easier way. We realize that his gospel brings relief from burdens too heavy to be borne, like those of the Jewish law. We recall Jesus' own words when he says that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. But the Sermon on the Mount brings us face to face with the fact that Jesus demands not less than others, but far more. First of all Jesus declares that the righteousness of the Kingdom is an inner righteousness. With a sure hand he uncovers the faults of a mere righteousness of rules. Rules can control a man outwardly, but they may leave wholly untouched the

real life of the man which is within. To show this Jesus takes up certain commandments by way of illustration.

The Spirit of Murder.—Here is murder. The law says, "Thou shalt not kill." But that law does not touch the real sin, the spirit that lies back of murder and out of which murder proceeds, the spirit of contempt and anger. Murder was a little-known crime among his hearers. But he knew only too well the bitterness and hatred that were among them. He knew that those models of strict law observance, the Pharisees, were full of scorn for the common people. Jesus had been criticized for being so lax; now he shows how much more searching his demand is than that of the strictest scribe.

The Spirit of Impurity.—From the sixth commandment Jesus turns to the seventh: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Here again he makes the contrast between the inner spirit and the outer act. There in the impure heart is the source of the sin; there, indeed, is the sin itself. Many a man is kept from murder or adultery or theft by the mere fear of consequence. The lustful glance, the impure desire—these are the sin against woman and self and God. The terrible evil of commercial prostitution is being curbed; but the great problem of the social evil is in the hearts of men, and the great challenge is to religion, not to the state. We must build up an inner righteousness, strong and pure, that shall show toward every woman the chivalry of Jesus.

The Spirit of Dishonest Speech.—The sin which Jesus condemns in Matthew 5. 33-37 is not ordinary profanity. The law made provision for the taking of oaths, simply insisting that an oath taken in the name of Jehovah must be kept (Leviticus 19. 12; Numbers 30. 2; Deuteronomy 23. 21). Many scholars hold that this is the meaning of the third commandment also, and that it should be translated: "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God for falsehood" (Exodus 20. 7, margin). Jesus' meaning, at least, is clear. It is the same protest against an outer life that does not correspond with the inner, the same insistence that only the inner spirit counts. The Jews used

many forms of oath in Jesus' day. Some were held to be binding, some were not. Instead of making speech more sacred or men more true, these oaths worked the other way. The virtue of simple true-speaking was lost. When men try to make one kind of statement more sacred and binding than another they imply that a man need not be so careful to be honest in ordinary speech. Against all this Jesus protests. Let your speech be simply yes and no, says Jesus. What Jesus wants he makes clear in another passage of this same sermon, 6. 22, 23: a single life absolutely given to God. In such a life there is only one purpose, to let God rule not simply in some words but in every word, and in the inner thought as well. This one perfect loyalty is the single eye, and that means a whole life that is light. A life that is all of one piece, true within and without, is what Jesus wants.

The Religion of the Spirit Foretold.—Men had seen the need of a religion of the spirit before Jesus' day. It appears in such noble passages as Psalm 51. 10 and Jeremiah 31. 31-33. But Jesus was the first to set forth that religion in its purity, to live it himself before men, and to give others power to live it after him. The Christian Church has not always maintained the high plane of its Master. Often men have sought to revive some letter of Old Testament law, like the Jewish Sabbath. At other times men have sought to make a law for men's faith and conscience out of some set of doctrines or rules or ordinances. Rules and forms and creeds have their place in the Christian Church, but they are not laws to be enforced nor are they ends in themselves. And we have no right to set them up between a man and God. So far as they help the Christain life and express the spirit of Christ, they may be retained as means. But the one and only essential is an inner spirit, the spirit of Christ. He who has this is a Christian.

Righteousness as Brotherhood and Sonship

Righteousness as a Life With Men.—The higher right-

eousness is social. With the Jews righteousness meant something to be done for God, so many rules to be kept because God had commanded them. With Jesus righteousness is a life to be lived with men. The rule of this life is good will. What good will means he makes plain by contrast. The primitive law among men everywhere has apparently been that of retaliation, and the Jewish law was not an exception. "Thine eyes shall not pity," it said; "life *shall go* for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Deuteronomy 19. 21; Exodus 21. 24; Leviticus 24. 20). Over against that Jesus sets up the principle of good will. Not love for love, and hate for hate; but love for all men no matter what they do. Nothing is to overcome this inner spirit which wishes only the good of others. They may beat you, or cheat you at the law, or oppress you by force; there is only one thing for the son of the Kingdom to do—to keep on showing them the same good will as did Jesus himself (Matthew 5. 38-42).

Sons of Your Father.—And so Jesus comes at last to the heart of his message. It can all be put into one word: men are to be sons of their Father (Matthew 5. 45). We have seen how Jesus took the name of Father and gave it a richer, larger meaning. He did the same with the name of son. The Jews too thought of themselves as children of Jehovah; but they had in mind only their privileges. When Jesus spoke of sonship he meant obligation, not privilege; an inward spirit, not an outward favor. To be a son of God is to be like God. And so we have the one and final standard for men; not any set of rules, not even those of the Old Testament, but the heart of God himself. To the men of his day, narrow, selfish, exacting their rights, he said: Love all men, enemy as well as neighbor. Pray for all men, persecutor as well as friend. Look up and see what God does; his sun shines upon good and evil, he sends his rain upon the unjust as well as the just. And you are to be like that; you are to aim at nothing less. "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Not Letter nor Law, but the Spirit

Literal Observance.—And now we must turn again to some of the precepts in this chapter over whose meaning and use men have differed so widely. Are we to take these all literally and absolutely? Are the Friends right in refusing to take an oath even in courts of justice? Is Tolstoy right in declaring that there should never be any resistance to violence, nor any refusal to another's request for goods or money? The writer heard one minister of the gospel declare that if a man came to his door and asked him for a quarter, it was his duty to give, even though he knew it would land in the saloon keeper's till in the next few minutes.

The smaller sects and religious movements have often illustrated the error of literalizing the words of Jesus. There is a Russian sect whose members bawl from the housetops whatever message they have to give, because Jesus told his disciples to proclaim from the housetops what he spoke in their ears. The same men hold smoking to be the sin of sins, because Jesus declared that it was that which came out of a man that defiled him. There is a certain humor in Jesus' word to Peter, when he declares that the disciples are to receive in this life a hundred houses for each that they had left, and so also mothers and brothers and sisters a hundredfold (Mark 10. 30). Because Luke in his report of this mentions wife also (Luke 18. 29), the Mormons claim that Jesus supported polygamy; for did he not promise the disciples each a hundred wives?

Jesus' Principle and Method.—It must be answered that in all these positions there is a fundamental misunderstanding of Jesus' principle and method. Jesus is not giving a new set of rules to take the place of the old. It is not rules at all that he is giving. He is replacing a religion of rules with a religion of the spirit. His method in the Sermon on the Mount is very simple. In each case he points out how inadequate the old rule is, showing that it is the inner spirit that counts. Then he makes this

plain by means of concrete illustrations. These suggestions of his, however, are not rules, but illustrations, and it is quite in his manner to give these in striking and even extreme form. Take Matthew 5. 38-42. Jesus opposes two principles to each other. One is that of give and take, it is the world's way to-day; the other is that of love, ungrudging, unmeasured, invincible, the kind of love that Paul sings later on. You may fight evil with evil, or you may show your unchanged good will by the turned cheek. You may meet injustice with retaliation, or you may answer the oppression by a deed of love; that is giving the cloak to him who has taken the coat. It is the spirit of love that Jesus is after. But it is not love to give a quarter to the man whose whisky-laden breath betrays his weakness; that is to sin against love. If we follow the law of love, we shall refuse the quarter. Those who turn these words of Jesus into a new set of rules are missing the Master's whole lesson, and unwittingly are becoming the scribes of a new legalism. The great demand of Jesus is for this spirit of love that is like the Father's, undeserved and invincible. The illustrations make plain the demand. But how that love shall show itself in the individual case will depend upon the circumstances. One way to show your good will for the drunkard at the door is to join the fight that will destroy the saloon; but that will cost you more than five minutes time or twenty-five cents of money.

What, Then, Is Goodness?

The Heart of Righteousness.—It is perhaps possible to put Jesus' ideal of goodness, or righteousness, in two words, though these words must be far larger and richer than in our common use. (1) Obedience (Matthew 6. 33; 7. 21; Mark 3. 35). This does not mean blind submission to some authority, nor the matter of habit or rule. It may be present in men who know but little of God and truth. The test is this: Does this man say "Yes!" to the highest that he knows? He that does this belongs to God, though he may hardly as yet know the name of him who speaks to

him. He who fails here has failed wholly (Matthew 5. 43-48; 22. 37-40). (2) Love. Man's "Yes" opens the door to God, the Spirit of goodness, but love is the best word to describe the spirit that thus comes in. It is more than a sentiment, an emotion. It is a character, the quality of unselfishness, of unconquerable good will, of positive service. It is, in other words, the spirit of Christ and the heart of God himself. This simple test may be applied in pagan land or Christian, with children or old folks, to the simple and the wise. One touches the will, the spring of all life; the other measures the heart, the inner spirit of the man. It does not mean perfection in either case; it does test the direction and spirit of a man's life, and tells surely what its goal will be.

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Matthew 5. 17-48; Luke 11. 33-44.

Review the principal points of the first two chapters, especially what is said about Jesus' method of teaching and wrong methods of interpreting his words.

Look through the whole Sermon on the Mount and note how all three chapters deal with the one theme of the true righteousness. Note how Jesus' method of teaching is illustrated here. He is practical, vital, concrete. He does not discuss in general terms, but gives concrete examples and applications. We must go back of these pictures to get the general principle.

Note how this chapter builds upon the last. The central thought of this chapter is sonship, and the idea of sonship flows directly from that of Fatherhood.

Read with great care Matthew 5. 17-48. State Jesus' central teaching here and show how this is illustrated and applied in each section.

What shall the modern Christian do with Matthew 5. 38-42? Can we follow its letter? Where would this lead us? Do we need its spirit? What changes would the rule of this spirit make?

Read Luke 11. 33-44. Note Jesus' criticism of the teaching and practice of the scribes (lawyers) and the Pharisees. Here is ground for their bitter hostility.

Consider Jesus' own spirit and life as illustration of his teaching about righteousness.

Note that this chapter gives us in a nutshell the ethics of Jesus, his ideal as to human character and conduct.

CHAPTER V

SONSHIP AS A GIFT

JESUS had accused the Pharisees of binding upon men's shoulders burdens that could not be borne. But if the demand of the law was hard, was not the demand of Jesus still harder? The law required certain deeds and gifts; Jesus went back of all this and demanded that the last thought and the last motive should belong to God. It was not enough to refrain from murder; there must be no anger, no bitterness in a man's heart, no impure desire in his soul. Love for friends and family was not enough, nor any single gift or deed of service; a man's whole life must be under the sway of the spirit of love, and he must show that continually and toward all men. All the rules of the Pharisees become petty and easy compared with this. No wonder the disciples exclaimed, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus demands that which is impossible for man. Sonship, in the sense of Jesus, no man can give to God. So we come to the other side of Jesus' teaching: sonship is a gift. God gives to men that sonship which he asks of them.

GRACE AS THE LAW OF GOD'S LIFE

Grace in the Old Testament.—The law of God's life is grace; such is the message of Jesus. The Old Testament was not without its vision of Jehovah as a gracious God. "When Israel was a child [that is, when he was insignificant, helpless], then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" (Hosea 11. 1). "In all their affliction he was afflicted," writes the Isaiah of the exile, "and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the

days of old. . . . I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite" (Isaiah 63. 9; 57. 15. Compare Psalm 103. 3-14). But all this had been obscured by the idea of God as lawgiver and judge. Men felt that when they had earned the right by their obedience, then God would treat them as sons, then he would receive them at his table in the Kingdom. God's presence and fellowship were a reward which men must first deserve. God's justice was the rule of his life, and justice was of this legal kind.

Grace in Jesus' Conduct and Word.—As elsewhere, Jesus here went back to the prophets. Better said, Jesus looked into his own heart. He knew what God was from the spirit that was in himself. That spirit he knew to be God's Spirit. When he received sinners and ate with them, he was setting forth God's way. That is why he told the parable of the forgiving father, which we have called the parable of the prodigal son. To be gracious and merciful is the very heart of God, it is the rule of his life. When Jesus served men and healed men, when he poured forth the wealth of his love and truth for the humblest and neediest, he was simply showing forth God's heart and acting in God's way. He did not, like the scribes, simply tell men what to do, or announce judgment. He went after men. He set himself in mercy to seek and to save the lost. Here too, he declares, he is only showing forth God. God is the Father who is ever watching for his children to turn to him, and going forth to meet them on the way (Luke 15. 1, 2, 11-32).

Sonship Is Gift as Well as Task.—Here, then, is the second meaning of sonship. The first meaning of sonship as studied in the last chapter is moral likeness to God, with which alone God can be satisfied; that is God's demand and man's task (Matthew 5. 45-48). In this second meaning, as considered in this chapter, sonship is the loving fellowship with himself into which God graciously takes men; sonship is God's gift (Luke 15. 20-24). And as we study this further, we shall see how task and gift are one.

What Is Sonship as a Gift?

Christian Forgiveness.—This gift of sonship involves forgiveness first of all. We must, however, get Jesus' idea of forgiveness. Forgiveness with men often means simply crossing off a debt, canceling a charge. It is looking backward and wiping out the past. With Jesus it means nothing less than God taking a man into the fellowship of a son despite the sins that had separated. Forgiveness means the gift of sonship, the gift of life. God never merely forgives sins, he forgives the sinner; that is, he takes him to himself. With God forgiving and giving always go together.

The Gift of Fellowship.—The end of forgiveness is thus fellowship, and fellowship is sonship. It is not a part of sonship, it is sonship itself. One may say it is not a part of religion, it is the whole of religion according to Jesus. The life with the Father as son is God's great gift to man, is man's great privilege and end. Prophet and psalmist had seen something of this (see Psalm 23); but never had it been seen so clearly, and set forth so simply and beautifully. God has many good gifts, but there is none like this gift, in which, indeed, all others are wrapped up. He is willing to give himself! Here is the wonder of Jesus' teaching. He showed men the God high and lifted up. He taught men reverence. He showed men, indeed, that there was nothing else to be feared beside this God who had all things in the power of his hand. And then he taught men to look up to this same mighty God and say, "Abba, Father." He made them feel this God coming into their own lives, mercifully calling them, willing to walk with them, ready to share every least sorrow, willing to give every good gift.

The New Meaning of Religion.—Here is the thought of religion with which Jesus has blessed the world. Religion, then as now, was filled with many things. It meant a great institution, with its priests and sacrifices. It meant a sacred book with many commands. It meant endless rules that one must always be studying and keeping.

All these Jesus brushed aside. To look up and say, "Our Father"; to look out and say, "Brother"—that is religion. To have a heart filled with love, the love that is utter humility and trust before God, and boundless good will toward men—that is religion. And all this may be put into the one word—"fellowship": to live as a son with the Father and with one's brothers. All faith is here, all needed doctrine. All trust is here, and peace. All confidence and joy are here, all service, all righteousness. Church and Scripture and creed and form—all of these we need. But they are the handmaids of religion, not religion itself. Religion is to live the life of a son with the Father, in the spirit and by the grace of Him who has shown us what both Fatherhood and sonship mean.

The Power of a New Life

The Problem.—And now we face the problem with which we began. What about the demand of God? Fellowship with God does not mean simply taking his gifts. To walk with God means to be like God. Of what use is it that God shall call us sons when we are not sons? Is the God of Jesus indifferent to holiness; can he look upon sin with allowance? How, then, can he receive sinners as if they were sons? And of what help is it that he invites us to come to him?

> **"So vile I am, how dare I hope to stand**
> **In the pure glory of that holy land?**
> **Before the whiteness of that throne appear?"**

The Answer.—The answer seems a paradox, but the Christian knows its truth: God receives us as sons in order that we may become sons. The trouble has been that we have looked at the relation of God and man under terms of law and business: so much credit and so much due. Jesus turned from mart and court and took the home. The world is God's house and men are his family, his children. They are not servants working for him; they are sons being trained. The father does not say to his boy, "First

become true and strong in character, and then I will associate with you." He takes the boy into fellowship with himself in order that the boy may become like himself. The friends of a certain Roman once asked him why he dined with his slaves. "I dine with some of them," he answered, "because they are worthy, and with the rest that I may make them worthy."

The Transforming Power of Fellowship.—Now we see, with Jesus, the deeper meaning of this fellowship. It is not a reward: it is God's method of training men. The only way to help people to be good is to live with them. The only way to lift up human life is to give life. That is the work of the teacher; it is not to give ideas, but to give something of oneself. That is the highest task of a father or a mother: to live with one's children and to give oneself to the children. Clothing and food and shelter and school advantages which money purchases can none of them take the place of fellowship between a father and his boy, in which a father gives his affection, his ideals, his spirit to that boy. That way Jesus went. He lived with men, and there was no other way to save men except this way of fellowship. We rightly put the cross at the center, but the death of Christ would have had no meaning but for the life that went before. And the glory of that life and death is the conviction which it brings us, that through him we look into the heart of our Father. God is no mere power dwelling on high, handing down his command to men. He is the Presence, dwelling near us in love, walking with us in fellowship. The heart of our lesson is this idea of the transforming power of fellowship. That is the way God gives life to men, that is the way he makes men over. God asks of us the spirit of love. We cannot make it; we can only open our heart to it. And so he gives us what he asks.

Sanctification.—It may profit us to look at the word "sanctification" and see the place of this doctrine in Jesus' teaching about sonship. There are two simple meanings for the word "sanctification." It means, first, belonging to God, and, second, being made over into the likeness of

God. The thought of sonship, or fellowship, as Jesus pictures it, throws light on both of these, and includes both. Sonship means belonging to God, or sanctification in the first sense. The son is one who has given himself to the Father, who belongs utterly to him in all trust and love and obedience. But it is upon the second question especially that light is thrown. It is, of course, always through the Spirit of God that men are made over, or made holy in life. But how does God's Spirit come and how does his Spirit work? We answer, in and through the fellowship which we have with God as his children. It is in the fellowship of children, in the practice of love and trust and aspiration and obedience, that God gives us his Spirit. And it is thus that the life of men is made over; it is thus that we grow as sons into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit.—And here the doctrine of the Holy Spirit becomes more clear. It is not some magic power or strange presence for which we pray when we ask God for his Spirit. We are asking simply for his presence, for this fellowship which alone can transform our life. The presence of the Holy Spirit involves this fellowship with God on the one hand, and a Christlikeness of temper and life on the other.

Other Aspects of Sonship

Sonship and the New Birth.—What we have been considering here is what the church has called regeneration, or the new birth, though we find neither of these names in the first three Gospels. The third chapter of John speaks of the new birth, or the birth from above (John 3. 3, margin). We cannot always be sure in reading the fourth Gospel whether we have the words of Jesus or the evangelist's interpretation of Jesus' message in his own language. But the truth brought out in John 3 is the same teaching of Jesus that we have been considering. What John says in mystical phrase the other Gospels give in simpler speech. When God receives men in forgiveness as his sons, he puts in them the spirit of sonship. This

spirit of sonship is the life from above, the new birth. So Paul understood it (Galatians 4. 5, 6; Romans 8. 9, 14, 15).

The Secret of Sonship.—In a passage of wonderful beauty Jesus points out what this fellowship means and how men may enter upon it (Matthew 11. 25-30). This spirit of sonship is his spirit. He has the secret of this fellowship, it is his own life, and he longs in his love to give it to men. The secret is not open to human wisdom, the clever cannot find the way. But children may find it, the humble and eager. They need only come to him. And they would come, if they only knew the peace and joy of that life as he knows it. And so, in words that have lured the hearts of men in all the centuries since, he speaks his invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The Scope of Sonship.—The questions have often been debated, Is God the Father of all men? Are all men children of God? A large part of this controversy has come from failure to understand what is meant by Fatherhood and sonship. Fatherhood, in Jesus' sense, means the spirit of grace and good will toward men. This spirit God shows toward all men, evil and good (Matthew 5. 45). He is, therefore, the Father of all, not only in the lesser sense that he has brought forth all men in his image, but in this high and absolute sense of his character. Because it is God's character that makes him Father, he will always be a Father to all men. It is different with men. There is the lesser sense in which all men are sons of God. God has made them all in his image, with the capacity for knowing and loving him, and all belong to him. But in the higher and truer sense, as Jesus uses the word in Matthew 5. 45, men are sons only when they are like God in character. They must have the Father's spirit to be the Father's children. It is character that makes sonship just as it makes Fatherhood. Men must love as God loves

in order to be sons of their Father. Using the words, then, in this higher sense, we may say that God is the Father of all men and that men are to become his sons.

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Luke 15. 1, 2, 11-32; Matthew 11. 25-30; John 3. 1-16.

Review the main points of the last two chapters. Note carefully how Jesus' idea of God as Father determines all his other teaching. The last chapter gave the heart of Jesus' teaching about ethics; here we have the heart of his thought of religion.

Read again the story of the prodigal son with one question in mind: What does it tell about the character of God and the way he receives men? State the narrower and the larger meaning of forgiveness.

With this same parable before you, consider what this restored sonship meant to the boy: (1) a gracious gift, the fellowship and friendship of his father; (2) a great demand, to live up to the spirit of this home and the character of such a father; (3) a great help, the love and sympathy of his father as a help to lead the new life. How far is all this true of a man's life with God?

Read Matthew 11. 25-30 and consider the transforming power of fellowship. Find illustrations of this in the home, and in the person of friend or teacher or pastor. Are men ever helped apart from some such personal touch? How does Jesus himself give such personal help to his followers? Note that his great promise here is that he will lead men into that fellowship with God which was his own strength and joy.

CHAPTER VI

SIN, REPENTANCE, AND FAITH

The message of Jesus was one of hope and good cheer. "Love is the law of God's life," he said. True, the Pharisees too spoke of God's love; but they said, "God loves the good," and they were ever separating the sinners from the saints. For the saints they held up promise of reward, for the sinners only condemnation. Jesus said, "The heavenly Father loves all." To harlots and taxgatherers and all manner of outcasts he declared, "God is your Father and is ready to receive; nay, more, he has gone out to look for you."

Such a proclamation seems at first glance to take out of religion all moral demand, to leave the matter of righteousness wholly to one side, to make religion a pure gift, a mere matter of God's mercy. If God thus loves the evil as the good, what have men to concern themselves about? Only the shallowest thinking can so regard Jesus' message. The good news is not an encouragement to rest easy; it is a tremendous call to repentance and righteousness. If God so loves, if he is waiting to receive you as his son, then it is time to hate the old ways, to seek the new ones. Such love shows what sin really is, such love summons men to turn about, such love demands faith and life. No man ever condemned sin like this prophet of love and mercy, and no one ever issued such a trumpet call to repentance.

Jesus' Teaching About Sin

The Heart of Sin.—There is always a danger that our ideas of sin and righteousness shall become conventional and shallow. There are people who are narrow, selfish, censorious, domineering, and yet who consider themselves

unusually pious, it may be, because they observe this form or avoid that amusement. There were men in Jesus' time who ignored pride and hardness of heart, but who were horrified at the breaking of some Sabbath rule. It is interesting to note what Jesus points out as sinful in the Sermon on the Mount. To be selfish or hard or unforgiving toward your brother, that is sin. To care for anything else more than for the right, that is sin. To fear anything more than you fear God, to love anything more than you love God, that is sin. Fear, worry, selfishness, greed, half-heartedness toward God, hard-heartedness toward men—these are the sins that concern Jesus. The heart of sin is the denial of the heart of goodness.[1] The test of goodness is man's "Yes" to the highest that he knows; the test of sin is man's "No" to good and God. The heart of goodness is the inner spirit of love, or good will; the heart of sin is selfishness.

Sin in All Men.—Jesus saw this sin in the hearts of all men. It is true he recognizes differences; he speaks very simply of the good man and the evil man (Matthew 12. 35). But goodness is simply relative here; over against the standard of God even good men are evil (Matthew 7. 11). It has been pointed out that Jesus calls some men righteous, and declares that he came not to call these, but sinners, to repentance (Matthew 9. 10-13); but a little attention will show the irony in Jesus' word. These men were "righteous" after their own fashion, but it was not the righteousness of God; for God said, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice," and these men were hard and unforgiving. Plain and unmistakable is his position in the parable of the two in the temple, where he speaks of those "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at naught" (Luke 18. 9-14).

A Keener Sense of Sin Needed.—One of the deep needs of to-day is a keener sense of sin. We are too indifferent toward sin, too ready to condone it. There are certain forms of sin which we are quick enough to condemn, but

[1] See Chapter IV.

they are not always the most serious. If a man but keep within certain limits he may be arrogant, self-seeking, lacking alike in humility and brotherly kindness, and we pass it by ofttimes without a word. We praise a man as a benefactor though the girls in his shop do not get a living wage. He may make himself rich out of the needs of the poor, but we are silent so long as he observes the forms of the law. And how often do we tolerate in our own lives the thing that we know to be impure or selfish or unbrotherly? We need to feel more deeply the eternal difference between right and wrong, the shame of all evil, the glory of all good. Especially do we need in all our leaders of Church and state a deeper passion for righteousness, a greater abhorrence of all self-seeking, a more loving and earnest concern for the common man.

Social Repentance.—In one aspect we may find some encouragement to-day, and that is in the new social passion and social penitence. It is significant that it is here that Jesus' indignation against sin was the strongest. Tender and patient with the individual, he was stern enough with the sins of men toward others. His woe is pronounced against the man that makes the little ones to stumble. That is why priest and scribe and Pharisee felt his scourge. We are coming, though slowly, to share Jesus' vision. We have been wont to point out the individual consequences of sin, to warn men of the hell to which they are tending. We need to point out the hell upon earth that sin makes for others. Sin is that which hinders God's kingdom; sin is that which curses our brothers and sisters. And we are all responsible. It is easy to rail at saloon keeper and dive keeper and corrupt politician, but how long could these live if good people had the goodness that Christ wants? Such goodness must know how to hate evil and love good and fight with God.

The Message of Repentance

The Demand of Jesus.—The call to repentance had been John's stirring summons. He had told the people that

the coming of God's kingdom meant not so much the triumph of the nation, as a day of judgment and of separation for the people. Let them therefore make ready and repent. It was this word that Jesus took up when the great prophet's lips closed in death: "The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1. 14, 15). John saw that men were not ready for God's judgment; Jesus saw that they were not ready for God's love, and so his whole ministry is one great summons to repentance. He sends out his disciples with this message (Mark 6. 12). He declares that the purpose of his coming is to call sinners to repent. He tells the Pharisees that he is like another Jonah, calling the age to repentance (Matthew 12. 41). It is the failure to repent with which he upbraids the cities of the plain (Matthew 11. 20). His last week in Jerusalem is one great appeal to the nation to turn from an evil and mistaken course. The doctrine of Jesus is not that of an easy and indulgent Father overlooking the sins of men; it is a heroic call to a change of heart and life. And man's answer to that call, he declares, fills all heaven with joy (Luke 15. 7, 10).

What Is Repentance?—The Greek word used in our Gospels, *metanoia,* means literally a change of thought, or mind; but that does not give Jesus' full thought. Neither is it enough to think of repentance as being merely a feeling of regret or sorrow, no matter how deep. Nor does it refer simply to the past. All these elements are included in repentance and more, for it is nothing less than a revolution in a man's life. Repentance includes a change of mind, or thought. The man that repents, like the prodigal, comes to himself. He has been beside himself; now for the first time he is sane. He sees his sin and he sees life in the right light. His whole attitude of mind is altered. But this is more than a change of thinking; his feelings are stirred. There is a sorrow over sin (2 Corinthians 7. 11), a hatred of it. And finally his will enters in. Tears may mean remorse; of themselves they do not mean repentance. Repentance is man's "about face" in purpose as well as in mind and feeling. And so

repentance looks forward as well as backward; the turning away from sin involves a man's longing for something higher.

Pictures of Sinners.—All this we gather not from so many words spoken by Jesus, but from his pictures of sinners and his own dealings with them. There is the prodigal son. His repentance begins on a pretty low plane; he is simply hungry. But the stomach pangs of the wanderer, like the need of many a wretch who has drifted into a rescue mission, are simply God's opportunity. When at last he turns home, he knows his sin and he wants his father; it is his sin that he talks about when he meets that father, and not bread. The publican in the temple shows even more clearly the thought of Jesus (Luke 18. 13). Here is the very essence of repentance: its humility that will not so much as lift up its eyes, the sense of sin that cries "me a sinner," the longing for God that makes him plead "God be merciful." And so Jesus approves the poor publican, just as he did that son who at first refused but afterward "repented himself, and went" (Matthew 21. 28, 29).

Jesus' Intercourse with Sinners shows clearly what he thought of repentance, how he rejoiced over it, and how tenderly he dealt with those that were stirred with his sorrow. There is the story of the woman who washed his feet with her tears and anointed them with ointment (Luke 7. 36-50). The Pharisee, Jesus' host, saw only a sinner, a woman of ill repute; Jesus saw a soul stirred with the passion of penitence that gave promise of a new life. The story of another and like woman in John's Gospel (8. 1-11) shows Jesus' contrasted attitude toward penitent and unrepentant. Jesus saw that the woman taken in adultery was not the only sinner present in that company; indeed, was there one of those about him who had not been guilty at least of evil desire? And was not their presence a sign of hard vindictiveness? Only, these men were unrepentant. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." With that word and with one look he convicted them and sent them out. We are not told

that the woman repented, but who can doubt from that final word of Jesus what happened? She came hard, defiant. She stood in that presence which was as pure as it was merciful. She left in penitence with his words in her ears: "Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; from henceforth sin no more."

Repentance and Righteousness.—The meaning of Christian repentance may be seen when we recall Jesus' idea of righteousness. If righteousness is an inner spirit and life, then it is not enough for men simply to stop doing evil deeds and begin attempting good ones. The inner attitude must be changed. A man must not only leave sin, but learn to hate it. He must not only turn to the new life, but he must do so with an inner passion of desire and devotion.

Jesus' Teaching About Faith

What Is Faith?—What we have to consider here is not the broad question of faith in general, but faith as joined to repentance at the beginning of the Christian life. What was the faith that Jesus asked of men? First of all, it was not mere belief. It is true we read in Mark 1. 15, "Repent ye, and believe in the gospel." But the word "believe" is put here in our English Bible because we have no verb in English that corresponds to the noun "faith." The original Greek has such a word. Faith with Jesus meant a personal trust and surrender. That was what he asked of men in relation to himself. He did not begin by saying: "What do you believe about me? Do you consider me to be the Messiah?" He said, "Arise, follow me!" That was what he asked of men in relation to God; not, "What do you believe about God?" but, "Will you give yourself to this God in trust?"

Why Faith Is Needed.—Such faith is the beginning of the Christian life and the source of all its power. Without it repentance would be helpless and hopeless. With this faith there come the forgiveness of sin and all the gifts of the new life. All this follows from Jesus' thought of God. All power, all love, all joy and peace, every good

gift is with God. And God does not give them grudgingly. He does not keep them for the few, for the righteous and deserving. Giving is the very life of God; to give to men is his joy and his deepest desire. He waits to help, to heal, to forgive, to save. He is the father who goes out to meet his returning son upon the way. What, then, is needed that men may have all this? Just one thing: faith. Not a system of doctrines hard to accept and harder to understand, but the trust of a child going to his father. God can make his sun to shine upon the evil and the good; he can give rain and harvests to the just and the unjust. But he can give forgiveness and love only to men of trust and of the open heart.

The Door of Life.—This, then, is the door to all life and joy and peace, an utter and self-abandoning trust in God, simple and whole-hearted like that of a child. In such faith lay Jesus' own power; he declares that it is by the finger of God that he casts out demons. In that trust he faced and vanquished the tempter, and in that confidence he went to the cross. He asks that faith of others, and where it is lacking he cannot heal (Mark 6. 5). Where he finds it, it fills his heart with joy (Matthew 8. 10). "Thy faith hath saved thee," he says, when he forgives or heals (Mark 5. 34; Luke 7. 50). All things are possible to the man with faith, he declares to the father of the epileptic boy. But he is willing also to take even the feeble faith that cries out, "I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9. 23, 24).

Directions for Study

The Scripture passages: Matthew 6. 22, 23; 7. 11; Mark 1. 14, 15; Luke 13. 1-5; 15. 7, 10, 17-19; 7. 50; 11. 20; Mark 9. 23, 24.

Recall the main points in the last three lessons; they are fundamental for all our study. Note God's character as perfectly righteous and as perfectly good. From the first comes Jesus' demand as to man's righteousness; from the second comes the great message of mercy, that the Father is willing to give sonship to men.

Read carefully the lesson discussion, looking up all Scripture passages. Note how the discussion all the way through builds upon the previous lessons.

Now go back to the three main points of the lesson: sin, repentance, faith. Concerning each of these ask yourself two questions: What is Jesus' central teaching? and, What has that to say to me? Give a definition of each.

Why are repentance and faith necessary before there can be any fellowship with God?

CHAPTER VII

HUMILITY AND ASPIRATION

We have been considering the question of the beginning of the Christian life, or the entrance into the Kingdom. There is God's side first of all, as Jesus pointed it out. The way of entrance is not our goodness, not our deserving; it is the grace of God, "whose property is always to have mercy." Sonship is God's gift. But there is man's side too, the turning from sin in penitence of soul, the opening of the heart in obedient trust. Thus the life begins with gracious forgiveness on God's side, with repentance and faith on ours. In the next three chapters we consider this new life of man in his relation with God; thereafter the Christian life as it is lived by man with fellow men.

Humility and Desire

The Reversal of Values.—Nowhere is the genius and originality of Jesus seen more clearly than in this, that he puts the spirit of humility and desire first. The philosopher Nietzsche charged Jesus with a "reversal of all values," putting down what men had hitherto praised, lifting up what they had despised. That is true. Men praised strength, and mastery, and success. The Jewish scribe and the Roman sage were not unlike here. Their blessings were for the man who had won: the man who had mastered the law, said the scribe; the man who was master of himself and his world, said the sage. In either case it was the man who had, the self-sufficient man. Jesus praised the man who had not, the man dissatisfied, the man that longed for something more.

Man's Need, God's Generosity.—It is not hard to understand this teaching of Jesus if we will only consider his

thought of God. Two things were true of God. First, he was the source of all life. Men had nothing except as it came from him; and all the want of men was from lack of God in their life. They were anxious and worried and weak because they had never really seen God's power and learned to trust him. They were narrow and hard and selfish because they did not know the Father's spirit. They made themselves the slaves of mere things, Mammon worshipers, because they had never found the highest good of life, which is in God. In the second place, this God who had all things was ready to give all. That was his very nature: he was Father. The law of his life was love, the desire to help and bless men.

The Obstacle.—What, then, stood in the way? Only one thing: men did not see and men did not care. The blindness of men Jesus sought to change by his teaching; he showed them this God waiting to receive and give, and this life of strength and joy. But the real obstacle was the self-satisfaction of men. It was not the sin of men. We know how he received the lowest and most vile. He had no doubt about these; "Go and sin no more," he said. But where men did not know the need of God how could God come in? How could God give where men were proud and self-centered? That was why Jesus rejoiced over those that sorrowed; that was why he praised humility and longing. It was not that these sinners were better than others; it was because their hearts were open to God, and for Jesus that was the promise of all goodness, and the only promise.

What Is Humility?—There is probably no Christian virtue which is more misunderstood than humility. Humility is not hypocritical self-depreciation; it is not self-depreciation at all. The true Christian does not call himself a worm of the dust; on the contrary, he knows that he is a son of the Most High. Only he knows that this high place is all the gift of God, and not of his own worth or desert. Nor does Christian humility sing, "O, to be nothing, nothing." The New Testament, on the contrary, declares that we are to be strong and wise and rich in good works and to quit ourselves like men; we are not

to be empty, but to be filled. But the Christian also realizes that all this life comes from God; he knows his utter dependence upon God and in his joy and strength has the perfect humility of a child, knowing no life but that from God, having no will but that of God.

Humility and Strength.—Such humility belongs not to weaklings, but to men who are as strong as they are clear-eyed. This is what Ruskin says in his Modern Painters: "I believe the first test of a truly great man is his humility. I do not mean by humility doubt of his own powers, or hesitation of speaking his opinions; but a right understanding of the relation between what he can do and say and the rest of the world's doings and sayings. All great men not only know their business, but usually know that they know it, and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them, only they do not think much of themselves on that account. Arnolfo knows that he can build a good dome at Florence; Albert Duerer writes calmly to one who has found fault with his work, 'It cannot be done better'; Sir Isaac Newton knows that he has worked out a problem or two that would have puzzled anybody else; only they do not expect their fellow men therefore to fall down and worship them. They have a curious undersense of powerlessness, feeling that the power is not *in* them, but *through* them, that they could not be or do anything else than God made them, and they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet, and are endlessly, foolishly, incredibly merciful."

The Soul of a Christian

The Soul of a Christian.—"Whenever there is danger of obscurity as to what Jesus' teaching means, then we will turn again and again to the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. They contain his ethics and his religion, joined in one root and freed from all that is external and particularistic." So writes Professor Harnack in his volume, *What is Christianity?* The Beatitudes undertake to answer the question, To whom shall the Kingdom be-

long? Practically, however, they set forth for us the soul of a Christian. Not all of the Christian life is set forth in them, but here is its heart. The Beatitudes must be considered together, for Jesus is setting forth one spirit and not describing different classes of people.

Humility and Desire.—What kind of a man then shall receive the Kingdom? The man who has kept the law, said the Pharisees, the man who has achieved; and as they said it, proud and self-satisfied, they thought of themselves. We may understand, then, the surprise with which men listened to Jesus' opening words. The blessed, said Jesus, are the poor in spirit, the men who know their need; and these shall receive the Kingdom. The blessed are not the contented, but those filled with sorrow at the knowledge of their need. They are the meek, not the proud; they have no will of their own before God, only a perfect and contented submission to him. But though meek and poor in spirit, they are not wanting in desire; they are men with a passion for righteousness that is like a consuming hunger. The central thought of the first four Beatitudes is one: the spirit of humility regarding oneself, the spirit of earnest longing toward God. With these goes the sixth, "Blessed are the pure in heart." The probable meaning is not freedom from impure thought, but rather sincerity and singleness of mind, a part of that same humility and aspiration.

Mercy and Peace.—The last three Beatitudes concern more a man's relation to his fellows. The men of the Kingdom will be merciful, for only thus can they be sons of their Father. They will be peacemakers, not only peaceable themselves, but bringing peace on earth because they bring righteousness. And because they have this passion for righteousness, they will not desist because of any cost to themselves; they will endure persecution.

Humility and Love.—In all these Beatitudes Jesus nowhere uses his supreme word, "love." And yet it is plain that that word underlies all these sayings. This spirit of humility and openness and earnest longing for God, what is it but love? The first element in our love for God, and

its main part, is letting God love us. That love, of course, when once it fills and rules our life, will lead us into every activity of service; but still this remains first and supreme in our love for God, the sense of our utter dependence and the eager desire for him to love us. And the spirit of mercy and peace, and the patient attitude under persecution, these are but the outworking of that love in our life with others. If we read, then, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, we shall find that song of love in the closest relation to these sayings of Jesus. Both show the same spirit of humility and devotion and desire which mark Christian love.

The Spirit of a Child

The Child Spirit and the Kingdom.—Side by side with the Beatitudes, sharing their beauty and bringing the same lesson, stands the message of the child. There are two stories to be considered here. The first tells how the little children were one day brought to Jesus for his blessing, and how the disciples tried to keep them away that they might not interfere with the Master's work (Mark 10. 13-16). The second narrates the rebuke which Jesus gave to his disciples in their strife as to which of them was greatest, and how he taught his lesson by placing the child in the midst (Matthew 18. 1-5). Now, in both cases we shall miss the lesson if we look only at the child. The main purpose of Jesus is not to talk of the child's relation to the Kingdom, but of the spirit that his disciples must have if they would enter that Kingdom. In both cases the disciples give the occasion for Jesus' word in their pride, their self-importance, their ambition. In both cases Jesus' message is the same: the men of the Kingdom must have the spirit of a child.

Childlikeness not Childishness.—It is easy to mistake Jesus' meaning here. He does not say that the child is the goal of the Christian life or a perfect example. The old theologians who talked about little children as though they were utterly depraved were no more wrong than the modern sentimentalists who talk of children as if they were

angels. The little child is neither an imp nor an angel, though the same child appears to act at times like both. We are not to expect little children to be saints; that belongs to mature Christians. The child is simply a man in the making. But the spirit of the child that draws us all is its openness and teachableness, its willingness to trust and to love. It is this that Jesus commends, not the immaturity of the child nor even its purity. The interest of childhood for us is not in its attainment, but in its promise. It is all open, all eager, all ready to trust and obey.

The Open Heart of the Child.—Here again are humility and desire, the thing that God wants. The tragedy of life is the loss of the spirit of the child that comes so soon. We lose the fine confidence in goodness and love; we lose our dreams: we grub in the muck with our rake and forget the sky and the stars. We lose our high hopes and ambitions and are cheaply satisfied. There is only one way to life: we must get again the open heart and the longing heart that we lost with our childhood. Only so, says Jesus, can we enter the Kingdom. We might turn the word about and say, only so can God enter into us; for the spirit of the child is the open door for God.

The Day of the Child.—Our day is the day of the child. The interest in the child came at first because of the helplessness of the child. So we planned child-labor laws to protect the child from exploitation, and compulsory education to secure him his rights. More and more we are seeing, however, that it is the life of the race, and not merely the right of the child, that is at stake. And this lesson on humility and desire shows why this is so. The child is our great chance to make over the world. The man past thirty rarely changes in his fundamental ideas and habits. We are hoping and praying to-day for a new world. In that new world there will be little of sickness and disease, and none of war. The strong will not exploit the weak, whether among nations or men. Broad of mind, clean of body, strong, just, kind, a new race of men shall walk the earth. How shall the new world come? Can we convert the chancelleries of Europe, the rulers and legislators of

the earth? Can we make over the hearts of manufacturers and merchant princes? Can we transform the men of a city from intemperance and lust to sobriety and purity? Can we change our citizenship from narrowness and indifference to alertness and unselfish devotion to the whole? Can we win the estranged masses to the faith and life of Jesus Christ? Yes, we can do it—with a few; but the real hope of the world is not with the grown-up men. Here, however, is the steady flowing stream of childhood that comes anew to every generation. The habits of men are fixed, the life of the child is plastic. The hearts of men are filled with many interests and cares, the child is open. All that is beautiful and good, all that is high and holy, may enter the world of to-morrow through the gate of the child of to-day. That is why we say to greed and selfishness and ignorance, "Hands off!" That is why we must fight for good housing conditions, child-labor laws, a living wage for the father that will let mother and child stay at home, and a system of public education that shall fit the child to live. And that is why the Church may spare no thought or toil or means in her greatest task and her greatest opportunity: the religious training of the child. It is Jesus' teaching that discovers to us this significance of childhood.

Saints and Sinners

Not Attainment, but Attitude.—We can see now how it was that Jesus so astonished the people of his day by the way in which he classified men. They divided men according to their attainments, Jesus according to their attitude. They saw the respectability and strict observance of rules in the Pharisees; Jesus saw their pride and self-satisfaction. They saw the sin and shame of publican and harlot; Jesus saw their willingness to trust and obey. It is not where a man stands that counts, but the direction in which he is facing. The Pharisees looked back contented upon their achievements. The others, out of their sin and shame, were looking toward God. The heart of the Pharisee was closed, the hearts of these sinners were open.

Very clearly does Jesus bring out this difference in the parable of the two men at prayer in the temple (Luke 18. 9-14). The Pharisee saw only his merit, the publican only his need. There was no question as to the Pharisee's uprightness or the publican's evil record. But the door of that Pharisee's life was shut to God that day, and the door of this sinner's heart was open. And "this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." The parable voices only what was made plain to Jesus by his own experience. He saw publicans and harlots, to his surprise, crowding into the Kingdom, eagerly taking his message, while the pillars of respectability and piety were unmoved.

Directions for Study

The Scripture passages: Matthew 5. 1-12; Mark 10. 13-16; Matthew 18. 1-4; Luke 18. 9-14.

Read the lesson narrative, looking up all Scripture passages.

With your Bible open before you, try to get Jesus' teaching as to humility. What did he mean by this? How did he illustrate it in his own character and life? Did it involve weakness, or the highest strength?

Is aspiration usually thought of as a virtue? Why is it so important in the Christian life? Turn again to Jesus' life for examples. What is the difference between Christian aspiration and selfish ambition?

What is the difference between childlikeness and childishness?

Chapter IV indicates Jesus' standard and ideal of goodness for man. In this chapter we see what it was that determined for him whether a man was right, or justified. State briefly his teaching on these two points.

CHAPTER VIII

DEVOTION AND TRUST

THE Church has long emphasized the Christ of kindliness and mercy and patience; there is danger that we forget the Jesus of stern demand. The God whom Jesus brought to men was a God of utter goodness, whose love knew no measure, who gave to men not only every earthly gift but his own self as well. But just because he gave so much, he had to ask much in return. He gave men the highest, he asked from them the utmost. All life, all love, all help he gave; in return he demanded perfect trust of heart and utter devotion of will. It is this demand of Jesus that we now consider.

JESUS' GREAT DEMAND

One who was present at that historic moment, tells how the defeated but undismayed Garibaldi made his appeal to the cheering throng that crowded about him in the Piazza of Saint Peter's. "I am going out from Rome," he said. "Let those who wish to continue the war against the stranger, come with me. I offer neither pay, nor quarters, nor provisions; I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles, and death. Let him who loves his country in his heart and not with his lips only, follow me."

The Summons of Jesus.—It was some such summons to devotion that Jesus brought to his disciples. He always put before men a sharp "either, or." He had no place for half-hearted men. We see this first of all in the way in which he called his disciples. Follow me, he says, and they leave the sea and their nets and all the old ways forever (Mark 1. 16-20). Matthew 10. 16-39 sets forth the devotion demanded of the disciple. We are told that the words were spoken by Jesus at the time when he sent forth the twelve upon a special mission. He asks of them absolute allegiance; they may even need to choose him over against

brother or father or children. He holds before them the prospect of persecution; it has come to their Master, and why should the servant be above his lord? He represents a great issue which knows no compromise; "I came not to send peace, but a sword." Condemned criminals went out to the place of execution bearing their own cross. That cross was the sign to every one that their lives were no longer their own. So, says Jesus to his disciples, you must follow me as men bearing their cross, whose lives are forfeited to me. As the end of Jesus' life drew near, his demand was even sharper. If you wish to follow me, he says to one, remember that the Son of man has not even a place to lay his head; while he rebukes another by declaring that there is no room in the Kingdom for men who put their hand to the plow but keep looking back (Luke 9. 57-62).

The Whole-Hearted Choice.—It is true that most of these sayings were probably spoken to the smaller group whom he had asked to be his personal companions; but Jesus makes it abundantly plain that he wants this same spirit in all his disciples. The Christian life is a great choice and it must be made whole-heartedly and absolutely. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other." "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness." "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it."

Jesus' Emphasis on the Will.—The Christian life has its different aspects. Religion could not live without emotion. There must be reverence, which the Bible sometimes calls fear; love and joy and peace are the natural fruitage of this experience. Religion engages the mind of man as well as his feelings; it is not blind and unthinking, but involves a conception of God and a definite idea of the meaning of the world and of life. But it is not in thought or feeling that Jesus puts the final test of a religious man; rather

it is in the will. What are you doing? he asks. The man that will rise and follow him is his disciple. He may understand very little; and how much did these men understand of what the church has called distinctive Christian doctrines? The test is in the will. The last part of the Sermon on the Mount is wholly given to this solemn truth (Matthew 7. 15-27). It is the fruit that counts—what a man does. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." Who is the wise man, with the life that shall endure like the house on the rock? It is the man "that heareth these words of mine and doeth them."

The Sin of Indecision.—The great teachers of life have been one with Jesus in the insistence upon decision and devotion of character, and in their condemnation of indifference and indecision. In a passage of searching power, Dante describes the poor wretches whom he found just outside the gates of hell, the souls of men for whom heaven had no place and whom not hell itself would receive.

> "This miserable fate
> Suffer the wretched souls of those who lived
> Without praise or blame, with that ill band
> Of angels mixed, who nor rebellious proved
> Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves
> Were only."

And then in one biting phrase he stamps their whole life:

> "These wretches who ne'er lived went on in nakedness."

To the same end writes Professor Peabody, in *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character:* "The first step toward safety is in the decision to proceed. The will takes up the march, and the mind and heart follow. Among the obstacles to the spiritual life on which Jesus primarily dwells is the sin of indecision: 'He that is not with me, is against me. He that gathereth not with me, scattereth. No man can serve two masters.' Neutrality is iniquity. Pilate, though he finds no fault with Jesus, is responsible for his fate. On which side? asks Jesus."

What Is This Obedience?

Is It Passive or Negative?—It is important, however, that we understand just what Jesus means by this obedience, for this word may have very different meanings. With some it means a blind, unquestioning, unthinking surrender, so that the man becomes a merely passive tool under a higher power. Such, for example, was the ideal of obedience held up by Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). He demanded the surrender not only of will, but of mind as well. His followers were to be like a ball of wax ready to be molded by the least touch, like a dead body that can be moved at will. Others have laid stress upon the negative side, the idea of surrender; for them obedience means giving up. Men have felt themselves called upon to give up property, the common business of life, home, and all forms of pleasure and even of comfort.

Blind Obedience.—In all this is a fundamental misunderstanding of Jesus. First of all, the obedience that he wants is not blind and unthinking; it is, rather, an obedience of trust resting upon personal conviction. He wants an absolute obedience, but only because of this conviction. Trust must come first, and he asks men to trust because he brings to them such a God as our Father. He does not ask us to shut our eyes and obey; he wants us to open our eyes and obey. Look at God! All power belongs to him, and all goodness too. To take his will is to find our life, to trust him is to gain strength to live that life. When man sees such a God as Jesus shows, then obedience is not from the will alone, but with mind and heart as well.

Passive Obedience.—Further, such obedience is not passive. What God wants is not a dead body, but a living man. The Christian life is not giving up, but taking on. What Jesus does is to give a man a worth-while goal. He asks absolute devotion, but only because he offers something high enough and big enough to command and to fill a man's life. The "Follow me" of Jesus is not a word of suppression, it is a call to high ambition, to noblest endeavor; it

is a challenge such as can come only by offering a man a great end for his life. To live as a son of God, to fling your life into the world for the sake of men, to help bring in God's kingdom, that is the challenge.

Living Obedience.—Thus it comes that the obedience which Jesus demands is really a gift which he bestows; it is a way of deliverance and life. The will of God means the way by which we come to the highest life. The disciple who prays, "Thy will be done," should say the words not with resignation accepting the inevitable, but with enthusiasm as the goal of his life and its battle-cry. In that word is wrapped up the highest that God has planned for his life, and for the world. "Thy will be done" means the same as "Thy kingdom come," and the kingdom for Jesus meant the fullest life and the highest good.

The Way to Strength and Peace.—The life of obedience, then, means a life of resolution and decision, and such a life alone brings success and satisfaction. The "double-minded man, unstable in all his ways," is the object of pity if not of scorn. The way of success lies with whole-hearted decision. "The longer I live," says one, "the more certain I am that the great difference between men, the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant, is energy and invincible determination." The undecided life or the divided life always means weakness. The decision which Jesus demands means strength. It means mastery of self, for no man rules himself till he has found something higher to which he may give himself. Such a high end gives unity to his life. It enables him to overcome evil desires and passions. It unites his forces and multiplies his strength. And because it is a high and worthy end it brings him unchanging satisfaction and unfailing peace.

The Life of Trust

No Obedience Without Trust.—The life of trust is the other side of the life of obedience. "Perfect obedience would be perfect happiness," some one has written, "if only we had perfect confidence in the power we were obey-

ing." Now, it is just these two things that Jesus joins together. He asks perfect obedience because he brings One in whom men may have perfect confidence. He asks a man to give his life entirely to one great end, and then he assures the man that so obeys that all his life is under God's care and that this high end will be achieved. George McDonald has well joined these two thoughts together when he says: "This is a healthy, a practical, a working faith. First, that a man's business is to do the will of God. Second, that God takes upon himself the care of that man. Third, and therefore, that a man ought never to be afraid of anything."

The Confidence of Christ.—No words of Jesus are more beautiful than those in which he pictures the peace and joy and strength that belong to this life of trust. Such was his life. Serene and unafraid, he takes his course. There is struggle, it is true. He knows the dangers; he sees the power of evil and the coming of its apparent triumph. He cries out in the agony of Gethsemane. His trust is not untried, but it is victorious. And the way of quiet and strength which he points out to others is the way that he himself has walked. When Jesus offers peace to men he does not talk of a beautiful but distant ideal. He says: "My peace I give unto you." "Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest."

The First Condition, a Vision of God.—The first condition of this life of trust, according to Christ, is a vision of God. It was his own deep sense of God that gave him this confidence and peace. Only one thing could cast out the fear of men, and that was the fear of God. Men needed to pray, as he did, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth." "Fear them not, therefore," he says to his disciples, when he speaks of coming danger. "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10. 26, 28). Jesus saw God's power in all things. "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father." Not the least part of this world's

life but was linked to God. "Behold the birds of the heaven; . . . your heavenly Father feedeth them." "Consider the lilies of the field." God clothes them all and the grass as well. To these timid, troubled men God was far off; evil spirits, the threat of hunger and misfortune, were near and real. The great fact for Jesus was the presence and power of God in all his world. And men needed the vision of God's love, his real concern for each humblest life. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows," Jesus cried out to them. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." "If God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

No Trust Without Surrender.—We have seen that without trust there can be no free and whole-hearted obedience. Now we must look at the other side: without obedience there can be no real trust. In both the passages which we have just been considering (Matthew 6. 19-34; 10. 16-39) Jesus joins these two great aspects of the life with God, obedience and trust. The man who is utterly given to God need never be afraid. "Be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you." "Fear them not." "Be not afraid." "Every one who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven." But the man who would trust God must be entirely given to him. The cure for worry is a single purpose. The root of worry is a divided mind. That is the literal meaning of the word translated "be not anxious" in the Revised Version. Jesus did not say, "Take no thought." Men are to take thought; Jesus wants men of earnest purpose and care. The mistake lies in the divided purpose. It is in trying to serve two masters, believing in God and yet being afraid about the world, loving God and yet concerned about many other things. To all this Jesus says: "No man can serve two masters." "Be not anxious for your life." "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Devotion and Confidence.—This, then, is the Christian life of trust. A great devotion comes first. A man finds

the real end of his life; he gives himself to that end and he knows that it will be his as sure as God is God.

"I go to prove my soul!
I see my way as birds their trackless way.
I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first,
I ask not: but . . .
In some time, his good time, I shall arrive:
He guides me and the bird."

And because man is confident of the great end, he is set free from the worry about lesser things or the enslaving care for them.

"I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.
I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

Directions for Study

The Scripture passages: Mark 1. 16-20; Luke 9. 57-62; Matthew 10. 16-39; 6. 19-34; 7. 21-27; Luke 12. 4-7.

After reading carefully these passages, turn again in thought to the life of Jesus and find specific illustrations of his obedience and trust.

Now note the two great words of this lesson. The first is devotion, or obedience. Just how much did Jesus ask of men in his day? How much of that applies to us now? Distinguish carefully between the ideal of Jesus of a positive and wholehearted life, and what many people mean by surrender and submission.

Consider next Jesus' ideal of the life of trust, and note how obedience, or decision of life, demands trust, and then how trust can come only with obedience or devotion.

How far is it true that the great men of action, notable leaders, have been men of faith and of decision of character? Give illustrations. Why is this true?

CHAPTER IX

PRAYER

Prayer is the very heart of religion. All that we have been studying of Jesus' conception of religion appears in his teaching about prayer. Here is the spirit of aspiration, of humility and dependence, of utter devotion and simple trust; and finally there is in prayer the true and necessary expression of that life of sonship which Jesus set forth as the one true life. Upon no subject did Jesus speak more fully and definitely than upon prayer, and to his words is added the witness of his own life in which prayer played so large a part.

Jesus Summoning Men to Pray

Encouraging Men to Pray.—Though Jesus spoke often of prayer, here, as always, his aim was practical; his interest was not in the theory of prayer. Prayer was the very breath of his own life; he knew the peace, the joy, the strength, that came with it. He saw men weak where they might be strong, anxious and full of cares where they might have peace. They did not pray. Some of them went through forms of prayer, but they did not know this life of trustful fellowship with God. And so that became his first task, to encourage men to pray. "Ask, and it shall be given you," he calls to men; "seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matthew 7. 7, 8). This was at the opening of his ministry; he brought the same encouragement to his disciples in the last days. They were in the midst of peril, facing an uncertain future and unknown tasks. If they could only have the strength of his

own confidence in God nothing would be impossible. Have faith in God, he cries to them; there's not a mountain in your way that will not yield, if you only ask of God and trust in God. Even faith like a tiny grain of mustard seed will do that (Mark 11. 22-24).

Prayer and Trust.—That is the first need, not forms of prayer, not a doctrine of prayer, but simply that men shall pray. But such praying as Jesus means can come only on one condition: there must be trust in God. It is that trust, therefore, that Jesus tries to awaken. Men did not pray, because God seemed far away, and they thought he did not care. First of all he taught them to say, "Father." It was not the common Jewish use to speak thus to God. God was King and Lord and Ruler rather than Father. Not once is that name used in address to God in the Psalms. But he who uses that name from his heart has already offered his prayer. That name holds the confidence that God is near and that he knows us each one and that he loves us. He who can say "Father" with his heart has already won strength and peace. "When we pray say, Father" (Luke 11. 2). "Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matthew 6. 31, 32). And then Jesus appeals, as so often, to their own experience. When your children ask for bread, do you give them a stone? Do you give them a serpent, when they ask for a fish? And yet you are but men, evil as compared with God. Shall not then your Father, who is all goodness and perfect love, give good things to those that ask them? (Matthew 7. 9-11).

The Nature of Prayer

Fatherhood and Prayer.—This vision of God is not only our ground for prayer, but it is our guide in learning how to pray. It tells us first of all what prayer is. Prayer is talking with God; it is fellowship coming to speech. Not all prayer is that; there is prayer which is only a device

for getting things from God. But that is what Christian prayer is, and it cannot be other than that, since fellowship is the law of the Christian life. This follows necessarily from Jesus' thought of Father and sonship; the Christian life is simply living with the Father the life of a son. Such a life must come to expression, and all such expression is prayer. Prayer, then, is something far broader than mere asking for things. We are likely to miss the right way if we begin, as is so often done, with the question, What may we ask for and how?

Pagan Prayer or Christian Trust?—We have already seen that into this fellowship with God, according to Jesus, there must enter desire, devotion, and trust; and all these belong to Christian prayer. It is in the lack of these that pagan prayer shows itself, and those remnants of paganism that we find sometimes in ourselves. It is paganism, for example, to think that God must first be cajoled or persuaded or wearied with our persistence before he will answer. Here belong the empty repetitions of which Jesus speaks, where men think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Over against this stands Christian trust. It begins with the assurance that God knows and that God cares; indeed, that he is eager to give us his good gifts. And it ends all prayer by gladly leaving every care and desire with the Father.

Devotion and Prayer.—Just as fundamental in Christian prayer is the spirit of devotion, or of utter surrender to God. If we put this first in life, as Jesus did, then it must underlie and condition all our praying. Here comes again the distinction between Christian prayer and pagan prayer. Pagan prayer seeks to bring God to its will; Christian prayer seeks to come to God's will. In Christian prayer we may ask for many things; but the end of that prayer will always be, "Thy will be done." But that is not all. "Thy will be done" does not simply come at the end to qualify; it stands at the beginning as the expression of our supreme desire. That is our first petition: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." We do not say it grudgingly, as those who yield at last after having beaten out our

strength, like some captive bird, against the iron bars of hard necessity; we say it with joy and confidence that spring from Christian trust. The will of God is not the hard demand, it is the great gift. It is the highest good that can come to us. Back of it are the wisdom and infinite love of God. Eagerly and longingly we bring our own desires; but when we have waited in the presence of God's love we end by saying, "Thy will be done." As we grow in Christ's spirit, that comes more and more to the front, until at last the prayer that Christ taught becomes the supreme desire for our own life and for the world: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." In that prayer, we come to see, lie the purpose of God's love and the hope of the world.

Prayer and Desire.—The thought of devotion has already brought us to the thought of desire. Prayer springs from man's need; it is the want of man that drives him to the feet of God. The broadest meaning of prayer is fellowship with the Divine, but within that fellowship there is always desire. It may be material and even selfish: the prayer for harvests, for health, for vengeance upon one's foes; or it may be the noble prayer of a Paul, ready to be accursed himself if only Israel might be saved. Christian prayer is not the giving up of desire, but only its transformation. We may ask for too many things, we never ask for too much. It is rather more desire that we need, not less, higher aspirations for ourselves and larger prayers for others. Jesus' words of Matthew 7. 7, 8 are like another beatitude, a blessing on those that ask; they belong indeed beside that fourth beatitude: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The Praying of Jesus.—There is no study of prayer that is more suggestive than the study of the praying of Jesus. Prayer was no incident for him, but a deep and constant need. The great epochs or crises of his life are marked by special prayer. He prays at his baptism and ere he begins his work (Luke 3. 21; 5. 16). He prays before choosing the twelve, before the announcement of his Messiahship,

and before he turns toward the last journey the goal of which was the cross (Luke 6. 12; 9. 18; 9. 28). His last night on earth was a night spent in prayer, while his companions slept in exhaustion (Mark 14. 32). But quite aside from such special occasions, prayer seems to have been the constant atmosphere of his life. It is easy for him at any time to lift his heart to God (Matthew 11. 25).

Paul Sabatier on Prayer.—Sabatier well expresses this idea of prayer in his life of Saint Francis of Assisi. "To pray is to talk with God, to lift ourselves up to him, to converse with him that he may come down to us. It is an act of meditation, of reflection, which presupposes the effort of all that is most personal in us. Looked at in this sense, prayer is the mother of all liberty and freedom.

"With Saint Francis, as with Jesus, prayer has this character of effort which makes of it the greatest moral act. . . . For him, as for his Master, the end of prayer is communion with the heavenly Father, the accord of the divine with the human; or, rather, it is man who puts forth his strength to do the work of God, not saying to him a mere passive, resigned, powerless, 'Thy will be done,' but courageously raising his head: 'Behold me, Lord, I delight to do thy will.'

"But it is not without difficulty that the soul unites itself to God, or, if one prefers, that it finds itself. A prayer ends at last in divine communion only when it began by a struggle. The patriarch of Israel had already divined this: The God who passes by tells his name only to those who stop him and do him violence to learn it. He learns only after long hours of conflict."

What to Pray For, and How

The Prayer of Faith.—And now we are ready for the question: What may we ask for, and what may we expect? The words of Jesus seem absolute and without condition: "Ask, and ye shall receive. All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Matthew 7. 7; Mark 11. 24). Let us recall first

the method of Jesus' teaching, remembering that he was not a theologian with exact definitions, but a preacher trying to stir men to life. We shall see the need, then, of taking Jesus' teachings as a whole. We find first that Jesus demands faith. Faith, we have seen, means more with Jesus than believing, or taking things as true; it is a personal trust and surrender. Its object is always God. But faith in God is very different from faith in our prayers. Faith in one's prayers is pagan; it looks upon prayer as a means of compelling God. Faith in God is Christian. But such faith does not insist upon its petition. If we really trust God we shall want his will rather than our wish (see Luke 22. 42; 2 Corinthians 12. 7-10).

In Jesus' Name.—The spirit of forgiveness is another condition in praying, especially in obtaining the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 6. 12-15; Mark 11. 25). That follows of necessity. Forgiveness means being received into fellowship by God; but an unforgiving spirit makes such a fellowship impossible. And this brings us to the main point. It is Christian prayer we are talking about, the prayer of a child of God; and it is to his disciples that Jesus holds forth these promises. Such prayer must be in the spirit of Christ. It is this truth that is brought out in the fourth Gospel where the promise is made to those who ask in Christ's name (John 14. 13, 14; 15. 16; 16. 23, 24, 26). Now, "in Jesus' name" is not a magical phrase by which we compel an answer; it means asking in the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of devotion to God's will (Luke 22. 42). Thus praying, there is no interest that we may not bring to God: business, health, family, future, all. A father will be interested in everything that belongs to his child.

Does Jesus Teach Importunity?

Two Parables.—There are two parables of Jesus which have usually been interpreted in a way that does not agree with what has been said so far. The first is the parable of the unwilling friend (Luke 11. 5-13). Roused one

night at midnight, a man heard a persistent calling at his door. It was a friend of his who declared that he must have some bread for unexpected guests. That was going a little too far, even for a friend, and the man at first refused. But the petitioner kept up his noise and what the man within would not do for friendship's sake, he did at last just to get quiet and sleep again. The second parable is that of the unjust judge (Luke 18. 1-8). Here was a man that had neither fear of God nor regard for what men said. What difference, then, did it make to him that a certain poor widow was in distress and wanted her case adjudicated. But his own comfort did concern him, and so he secured justice for her at last simply because her persistence had made life a burden to him. Are we not taught here, it is said, the need of importunity in prayer, the fact that God will grant men their requests if they are but persistent?

Wrong Meanings and Right.—This interpretation, however, will not stand scrutiny, for it involves a comparing of God with the unwilling friend and the unjust judge. Is God's love so straitened that it needs our importunity to secure an answer? Or must our importunity persuade God to do what is right? The real argument of Jesus is quite simple and it points just the other way. You men lack in faith and fail to pray, Jesus would say, because you do not thoroughly believe that God will answer. But look about you. Even men that are not good yield to men's entreaties, like this unjust judge or this man so provoked at having his whole household disturbed at midnight. If such imperfect and even wicked men will grant what others ask, will not your Father, who is all goodness and love, give what his children cry for? Like the reference to earthly fathers and their children, there is here a fine encouragement to trust in God and to pray.

The Lord's Prayer

The Perfect Prayer.—In simple but beautiful form the Lord's Prayer sets forth concretely the idea of Jesus. Brief

though it is, this prayer covers the great needs of man. Here all selfishness and anxiety have disappeared, and instead is an atmosphere of reverent trust and perfect peace. Comparing Matthew 6. 9-13 with Luke 11. 2-4, we note considerable difference in the two forms in which the prayer has come down to us. We note also that the Revised Version omits the words "thine is the kingdom," etc. It will be seen, however, that the two accounts agree in the most important portions.

What It Contains.—The opening words recognize both the love and the holiness of God. The word Father speaks of God's love and man's trust; "hallowed be thy name" is not so much a petition as a word of reverence and adoration. And so the prayer begins, as every prayer should, with the confident heart and the bowed soul. The first two petitions mean the same; "thy will be done" is but an explanation of "thy kingdom come." The great surrender to God comes before a single personal request is raised; and yet it is far more than passive surrender, for here is the highest good of him who prays and the great goal for all life. Now follow three detailed petitions, which belong together. These, too, are not mere petitions; they are at the same time a glad confession of dependence and a humble acknowledgment of thanks. The simple words cover by suggestion the whole of life. The daily bread represents all material interests. Jesus draws no line to separate material from spiritual; the whole life belongs to God, and God cares for the whole life. "Forgive us" stands for all spiritual gifts and interests; for forgiveness with Jesus means the whole grace and mercy of God coming into a man's life. Looking back, a man asks for pardon; looking forward, there comes the desire to be freed from sin. And so the man asks for guidance, that he may not be tempted beyond strength, and for deliverance when the temptation comes: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver." In all this prayer there is nothing selfish and nothing particularistic. It is as high as heaven, for it puts God's rule first; it is as broad as human kind, for it says "our," not "mine."

Directions for Study

The Scripture passages: Matthew 6. 5-15; 7. 7-11; Mark 11. 22-25; Luke 11. 5-13; 18. 1-8.

After reading these passages, write down in order all the references to prayer in the life of Jesus that you can recall. Where does Jesus speak of praying for others? Where do we read of his giving thanks?

Study each section of the preceding discussion, having in mind, first, the Scripture passages just read; second, the life of Jesus as giving illustration of these truths.

This lesson is full of practical help. Ask yourself what this study should mean for your own life.

Show how Jesus' conception of God as Father determines each point in this teaching on prayer: the encouragement to pray, the nature of prayer, what to ask for and how.

CHAPTER X

THE LAW OF BROTHERHOOD

The faith and life of Jesus had but one source, and that was God. From that same source there flows all his teaching. When he has told us that God is Father, he has given us his whole message; it remains only for us to see what that means for various questions of life and faith. Because God is Father, men dare to call themselves sons. Because he is Father, we venture to trust and to lift up hearts in prayer. Because he is Father, we must repent of unloving and disobedient lives and turn with entire surrender to him. We have been studying how men are to live with such a Father; now we are to consider how men who believe in such a Father are to live with their fellow men. This life with men will form the theme of the next five lessons.

The Supreme Rule of Life

Summaries of the Law.—The search for a rule of life is one of the great human quests. We are all asking, "What must I do?" For the Jews of Jesus' day, the rule of life consisted of the commandments contained in the books of the law, together with the numberless rules that had been based on these by the scribes. In that day, as in this, men tried to sum up these demands in one single rule. On two different occasions Jesus thus summed up the teaching of the Old Testament. In the Sermon on the Mount he said, "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7. 12). Near the close of his ministry, answering a scribe, he said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with

all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets" (Matthew 22. 35-40).

The Rule of Sonship.—In both these instances, however, Jesus is looking backward and summing up the law. When he gives his own rule of life, it goes beyond even these high maxims. He gives it at the close of the fifth chapter of Matthew, in which he has been setting forth the higher righteousness: "that ye may be sons of your Father." Nothing could be simpler than this: We are to be like our Father. Nothing could be more searching than this, for it goes to the inner spirit of a man's life. And nothing could be broader than this, for it takes in every part of life. Here is the highest standard that can be set for life; not God's commands, but God's own self. Jesus pictures the loving and pure spirit of God and then says to us, "That is to be the rule of your life."

The Unforgiving Brother.—In two striking passages Jesus set this forth. The first might be called the parable of the unforgiving brother (Luke 15. 25-32). It is a pendant to the story of the forgiving father, which we commonly call the parable of the prodigal son. In this latter parable Jesus had defended his own treatment of sinners by setting forth the spirit of God: God is like the forgiving father, not asking what his son has deserved at his hands, but only what he might do for him now that he was found. Within the house all had joined with the father in his rejoicing. But outside stands the older brother, just come from the field, angry and jealous. It was not fair, he protested. He had worked all these years, and his father had never given him so much as a kid that he might have a feast with his friends. And this tramp, this reprobate, was having a fatted calf.

The Unfilial Spirit.—The two parables are opposite sides of the same shield, and they point to the same lesson. In both of them Jesus is rebuking the unbrotherly spirit of the Pharisees. In the former he confutes them with the

picture of the Father's mercy; in the latter he shames them by showing their own likeness in the elder brother. The elder brother makes plain what the sons of the Father should not be. The Father's rule is mercy, the elder brother talks of justice. The Father thinks only of the boy, the elder brother only of himself. All the hard, critical, self-centered spirit is here. He does not say, "My brother," but "Thy son." He drags out the details of his brother's shame, "who hath devoured thy living with harlots." He is as little filial in spirit as he is fraternal; he looks upon his father as a kind of taskmaster (verse 29). When he thinks of a possible good time it is "with my friends," not with his father.

The Spirit of the True Brother.—The other passage is in Matthew 5. 43-48. These closing verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew deserve to stand beside the opening verses of the chapter, the Beatitudes. Here is the heart of Jesus' teaching about the true life of man. The spirit of openness toward God, of humility and devotion and desire, that is the picture of the Beatitudes. The spirit of utter good will toward men, that is the message of the closing verses. And these two are one, humility and unselfish good will. One of them is love turned toward God, the other is love turned toward men. In these last verses Jesus shows that this good will is the spirit of God. God sees a world in which many of his children are selfish, forgetful of his love, hard toward their brethren. But his good gifts go to the evil as to the good; the sun that gives life, the rain that waters the earth, are for all alike. And we are to be his children, we are to be like that. Here, then, is the rule of life: sonship, to be a brother to men in the spirit of the Father.

The Scope of Brotherhood

Not a Relation of Give and Get.—What this rule of brotherhood means in detail we shall consider in the following chapters which treat of reverence and good will and service. We must ask next as to the scope of brotherhood.

Jesus' hearers did not need to be told what brotherliness was; the trouble lay not in the fact, but in the extent. Men limited the practice of brotherhood then just about as they do now, and Jesus points out these limitations. We love, first of all, those that love us. We love our friends. We send gifts at Christmas to those who send gifts to us, and change the day of God's good will into an anxious season of buying and trading. That is not brotherhood; that is simply the old rule of give and take. Brotherhood means grace, it means giving where you do not get (Matthew 5. 38-42).

Beyond Class and Race.—In the second place, men limit brotherhood to their circle or society, their church or community, their race or nation. They "salute their brethren only." A downtown church moves out "because there are no people left." As a matter of fact, there are more people than before in the fine old houses that have been changed to tenements, only they are not "our kind." But there is only one kind according to Jesus' teaching, and that is the Father's children. The man who disowns any of the Father's children is really cutting himself off from the Father, and going out of the Father's house. Christian missions are a great proclamation of brotherhood. In no land has the Christian Church a better chance for "brothering" than here in America, where all the nations are gathered together. But such brothering must be more than vague sentiment. A good way to brother a man is to look out for the brother's children and count them as ours. Are we showing brotherhood to the children of our community? That means not merely the children of our Sunday school, but the little Russian, Jewish, and Italian children. Do we care how they are fed and housed, whether they have the chance at wholesome play, and whether their fathers, our brothers, are paid a living wage?

Fellowship in the Christian Church

The Community of Christ's Followers.—But brotherhood is not simply a spirit that we are to show toward others;

it is a life of fellowship that we live together. We have already seen that while God is fatherly toward all, not all men live with him as sons. In the same way, though we are to be brotherly toward all men, not all men will live with us as brothers. Where men do live together in that way, we have a new and higher kind of brotherhood, a true fellowship. That is the final purpose of God, to bring all his children together in such a fellowship, or world-family. Ideally, that is what the church is to-day, a fellowship or community of all who are trying to live as God's children after the spirit of Christ.

If we ask for Jesus' teaching concerning this fellowship, we find we have scarcely anything bearing directly upon it. The Gospels give us nowhere any precept from Jesus as to the duty of organizing a church, or directions as to how this shall be done. Nor do the beginnings of the church at Jerusalem imply this. The disciples apparently still consider themselves a part of the Jewish Church, though they assemble themselves together, as would be expected, and look to the twelve for guidance and leadership.

The First Fellowship.—All this, however, need not surprise us. Here too Jesus came to give life and not rules, and it takes but little study of the life that Jesus came to bring to show that fellowship has been from the beginning an essential part of it. That appeared first of all in the fellowship of Jesus and his disciples. There never was a simpler fellowship than this, for there was no test of creed, no rules to which to subscribe, no long novitiate. There was only one test, the willingness to follow Jesus. But that fellowship had in it the essentials of a religious communion. Jesus had called these men, "that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth." Here was fellowship of life and fellowship of service, and that includes it all.

The Church Based on Spirit, Not Law.—What operated in that first instance has operated ever since. If every church building were razed to the ground to-morrow and every Christian communion disbanded, it would not be a

week before groups of Christian people all over the world would come together for fellowship in worship and for common service. Jesus gave neither commandment nor direction as to organizing the church, but he did three things. He organized the first fellowship, a little group of men and women which came together again after his resurrection and formed the nucleus of the church. Second, he set forth an ideal of religion which could be practiced only in fellowship with men, for it demanded good will, forbearance, helpfulness, service. And, finally, he gave men a common spirit of love and devotion which has drawn his followers together with a pull as sure and strong as that which holds the stars above. Fellowship is at the very heart of Christianity. It rests on no uncertain commandment, but upon an abiding spirit. No danger or persecution has ever been able to break this bond.

The Fellowship of Christ and the Visible Church.—Jesus declared that the men who did God's will were his brothers and sisters (Mark 3. 35). In the great judgment he counts as his own all who have ministered to men in his spirit (Matthew 25. 34-40). We of to-day need to recognize this larger fellowship of Christlike spirit and service, though it leads beyond the bounds of the visible church of Christ. In this day when the love of righteousness and the service of men are so needed, we should do all we can to find out the men of this larger brotherhood, and to unite all that will thus join for a common service.

Directions for Study

The Scripture passages: Luke 15. 25-32; Matthew 5. 38-48.

Go back in brief review and ask what Jesus' idea of God's Fatherhood means for our thought of God, of ourselves, and of our life with God.

Now study how Fatherhood gives to us as sons a law of life in relation to our brothers. Read the first section of the discussion. Compare this rule of brotherhood, or sonship, with other rules like the Golden Rule.

Consider the principle of brotherhood as reflected in the Christian Church. Does this limit the application of Christ's principle, or is the church an instrument for carrying brother-

hood into all the world's life? In what ways is this done by the church?

What conditions in our church life, local and general, make against brotherhood? How are these to be overcome? Apply these same questions to our social, political, and economic life.

CHAPTER XI

THE LAW OF REVERENCE AND REGARD

The word "brother" is a word that is often lightly used. The "brotherhood of man" is a phrase that is frequently upon men's lips. Often it means no more than the physical or social unity of the race. We have seen that Jesus took the word "brother" and extended it to all men. But he did far more. He deepened it, and filled it with new and richer meaning. He made of it a great demand, a life for men to live with each other. We are to study now in some detail what this life of brotherhood requires, and we begin with this principle: Every human being is sacred in the sight of God and demands from each of us reverence and regard.

The Worth of a Man

God's Reverence for Man.—The law of reverence and regard begins with God. God has pity for all his creatures, but for man he has reverence. Man may be weak like other creatures, or even sinful; but he is a personal being like God; God is Father and man is child. All else that we know in God's universe is instrument, but man is end. The world is here for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the world. Man alone can know what truth is, and righteousness, and love. He can set before himself a goal and follow after it. But the highest is this: he can know God and live in fellowship with God. And this is true not simply of the wise and the strong; it belongs to men as men, to all human kind.

The Value of a Man.—From all this follows the infinite value of the human soul. He points out to men what their own life is worth: "What doth it profit a man, to gain the

whole world, and forfeit his life?" (Mark 8. 36, 37.) What Jesus means is not a man's physical life, nor yet the soul's existence beyond the grave; he means his true life as a man and a child of God both here and yonder. His reference to the child has the same meaning, the priceless worth of a single human soul. Here is the child, he says, the weakest and the least of human kind; yet it were better for a man, like the criminals in Galilee, to be cast into the lake with a millstone about his neck, than to make even one such child to stumble (Mark 9. 42). The parables of the lost coin and the lost sheep assert the same great truth. Though the shepherd has ninety and nine sheep, the one lost sheep is yet dear to him. The woman cannot forget her tenth piece of silver though she has nine others. So God cannot forget a single child of his that wanders. Every single human being has infinite value in his eyes. And all heaven rejoices when one who is lost comes back (Luke 15. 1-10).

The Law of Reverence in Jesus' Life

Jesus' Treatment of Men.—God's estimate of men and God's treatment of them is revealed in Jesus' conduct as well as in his teaching. There is no man who does not have infinite value for Jesus, and none whom he does not treat as personal being. He had his friends to whom he was specially drawn—Peter, James, John, the household at Bethany; but no man came under his eye so poor, so sinful, so wretched that Jesus did not care for him. He received them all, publican, harlot, thief on the cross; each one he treated as a human being. He had respect for their mind. He did not simply say, "You must believe this"; he appealed to them as reasoning beings, "What think ye?" He had respect for their wills. He did not simply throw out commands; he set forth ideals, a life. Above all, he showed his reverence for men by giving himself to them. He became their companion, their friend.

His Attitude Toward Sinners.—One might write a chapter on "Jesus as Gentleman," if one could only restore to

the latter word its fine and true meaning. Pure and strong himself, toward the sinful and weak Jesus was always the gentle man. There was that in him which the psalmist saw in God:

> "Thy right hand hath holden me up,
> And thy gentleness hath made me great."

With what thoughtfulness and consideration he treats men! He does not say to Zacchæus, "Traitor to your people and robber of men, come down." He says, "Zacchæus, I must be your guest to-day." He can be bold in denouncing, but he does not shame and humiliate. Most beautifully is his spirit revealed in his treatment of the woman taken in adultery (John 8. 1-11). She was a mere harlot to her accusers. They were not caring for her; they were willing to trample her last bit of self-respect under foot in this effort to embarrass Jesus with their question. For him she is still a woman, a person. While they are making their charge he will not look up from the ground. When he raises his head at length, it is to face them, and not her. And then, stooping again, he leaves them with that searching word.

God's Way with Men.—And all this reflects God's way with men. He does not drive men; he leads them with a patience that is measured by the ages. His method with the race is that of education. By sorrows and by joys, by gifts and tasks alike, he seeks to lead men on. But always he respects the human personality; there is no compulsion, no outer force. He has made man to know and he appeals to man's thought: "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1. 18). He has made men to love, and he appeals to their affection: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him." "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (Hosea 11. 1, 4). He offers man his friendship: "If any man . . . open the door, I will come in." But here again there is reverence for man. Man must choose freely; God never breaks down the door. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," he says (Revelation 3. 20).

Reverence for Self

The Higher Self.—Such a reverence for human personality on God's part has far-reaching meaning for us. It means obligation as well as privilege, and first of all the obligation of reverence for oneself. That does not involve egotism or self-esteem, nor does it mean selfishness. Every man has in him three beings. There is the man that men see, and that may be very far from the real man. There is the man that he himself sees—at his worst a man of weakness and sin, at his best still incomplete. And then there is the man that God sees, the ideal that God plans for us all. That is the true man. We are not "worms of the earth," or "creatures of the dust." We are God's children, and we must live up to that high calling.

The Sin Against Self.—The story of the rich fool gives us Jesus' teaching here (Luke 12. 13-21). This man had not oppressed his neighbors, he was not guilty of vice or crime. He had failed in reverence for his real self. He was a man, and he had put himself down on the level of things. He was a soul in God's image; he had treated himself as a body which was to eat and drink and possess. If it be a sin to treat other men as mere machines, it is just as truly a sin for a man to treat himself that way. He who treats himself as a body to be fed instead of a soul that is to live, as a creature of earth instead of a son of God—he is guilty of irreverence toward man in his own person. Drunkenness and gluttony, greed and pride, are all sins against this true self, a lack of reverence for human personality, which God puts above the world. And so anger and fear, hatred and malice, and all the rest are sins against self, defiling God's image. Better far that a man cut off his right hand or pluck out his right eye.

Reverence for Fellow Man

The Sin of Scorn.—Most searching is this law of reverence for personality when applied to our relations with men. No sin was more common in Jesus' day than the

scorn of man for man. The priest was the bitter foe of the Pharisee, and proud of his own position and lineage. The Pharisee in turn despised the common man who did not keep the strict law. The Jew hated the Samaritan, and both shared in fierce scorn for the taxgatherer. They themselves were despised as a race by the Greek and the Roman, and they returned that feeling with interest. No sin did Jesus rebuke more severely than the sin of scorn against men (Matthew 18. 10). He places anger side by side with murder; and with even severer condemnation he visits him who calls his brother worthless, or fool (Matthew 5. 21-24). It is this that lies back of his severe treatment of the scribes and Pharisees. A liberal Jewish scholar,[1] who is not lacking in large appreciation of the spirit and teaching of Jesus, complains that Jesus did not observe his own law of good will in his denunciation of the Pharisees. But Jesus scourges these men, not because of what they did to him, but because of what they did to the people, whom they scorned on the one hand and led astray upon the other. Back of his condemnation is this same regard for men.

The Failure of the Old World.—In the world to which Jesus came there were many sacred things. Religious traditions and institutions were sacred, and because Jesus ran counter to these they led him to his death. The state was sacred, and property, and rank, and ancient privilege. But man was not sacred. The Jews were advanced beyond others in their regard for human rights; but beside national prejudice which scorned other peoples, there was the fact of slavery and the position of woman. A Jew might divorce his wife almost at will. She herself had no recourse, nor could she bring similar action against him. Woman was not treated as a full personality. Her position was even worse in other lands. She did not stand in the law for herself or by herself; she must always belong to some one, to father, to husband, or, in their absence, to brother or son. The institution of slavery was even

[1] Montefiore, *The Religious Teaching of Jesus.*

more significant. The Roman empire numbered its slaves by millions, and there were far more slaves in Italy than free men. The slaves were often of the same race as their masters. As slaves, however, they were not men, but property. They could be scourged, imprisoned, and even killed.

The Rule of Reverence To-Day.—The principle of reverence for human personality underlies social advance in every field to-day. Jesus did not discuss the modern problems with which we are familiar, the questions of industry, politics, war, education, the position of woman, the rights of the child. And yet by his teaching of reverence for human personality Jesus has done more to solve these problems than the greatest world leader of our times. Democracy is one great expression of it, for democracy rests back upon the simple truth of the worth of man as man. World peace is another conclusion drawn from it; for war springs from the greeds and hates of national governments, and sacrifices the common man. Where Jesus' principle prevails, war must go. The movement for social and industrial justice also rests upon this principle. We are no longer content to talk about great factories and a big balance of trade. What does all this mean for the men and women that work? Have they a fair share of what is brought forth? Are they decently housed and properly fed? Is there work for the man that wants it? Are children rightly born into the world and rightly trained for life? More and more we are seeing how radical this principle of Jesus is. Only one thing is sacred, not property or profit, not the state nor the church: manhood is sacred and manhood alone. Everything else must answer the test: What does this mean for the welfare of human beings?

The Rule of Reverence as an Instrument of Power

Reverence and Life.—This rule of reverence and regard for moral personality has another most important meaning. We must remember it not simply in giving men their rights, but in our efforts to serve men. You can mold clay into

bricks by the mere use of force from without; you cannot help men that way. You may be dealing with the little child who is all ignorant, or with the criminal who seems to have forfeited all rights; but if you are to train in the one case, or to reform in the other, you must remember that you are dealing with personal beings, not with things. The rule of reverence and regard must be observed. In the one, as in the other, there is a personal life. Unless you reverence that life and seek to enlist its forces, you are helpless.

Jesus' Method and Its Power.—We have seen that this was Jesus' method, to reverence the human in man and to call it forth; and no one has shown the power of that method more than he. He combined here two needed qualities for the helpful dealing with men. First, he saw clearly what was. No one saw more plainly the sins and faults of men; he was no dreamy sentimentalist. Second, he had faith in what might be; and so he called forth all that was in men. He touched them with his spirit, and they rose in newness of life. He gave them confidence, confidence in God, confidence in themselves. To others they were harlots, publicans, sinners; he treated them like men, like children of God. And they responded to his faith.

Directions for Study

The Scripture passages: Luke 15. 1-10; John 8. 1-11; Luke 12. 13-21; Mark 8. 36, 37; Matthew 18. 1-14; 5. 21-24.

Most of these Scripture passages we have already studied from other standpoints. Go over them rapidly, but carefully, with one thought in mind: what do they teach of the infinite worth of a human soul and the right regard for it?

Study first the Christian basis for this truth: that man is like God, and was made for God ■■ God's son. Is there any other sufficient basis for this law of reverence?

Now consider in the light of this truth of what man is, Jesus' attitude toward men, God's attitude ■■ thus revealed by Jesus, and what our attitude should be.

Point out where the greatest advances have been made in our modern life in line with this principle. Point out some features of our modern life which still contradict this truth.

CHAPTER XII

THE LAW OF GRACE AND GOOD WILL

The law of brotherhood, we have seen, is a law of reverence; we are to hold every human being sacred because he is man, no matter what he has done. But Jesus' law of brotherhood leads us farther than that. Brotherhood means also the spirit of love, that spirit that desires the good of all men.

Was the Teaching New?

Love and Mercy in the Old Testament.—The principle of love and mercy was not a new teaching. The Old Testament, which speaks of God's spirit of mercy, also declares the duty of man's love for man (Deuteronomy 10. 18, 19; 15. 7-11; 24. 17-22; Isaiah 58. 6, 7; Micah 6. 8; Zechariah 7. 9). It was from the Old Testament that Jesus quoted when he set forth the law of love for God and man. And the passages just referred to do not limit this love to Israel; men were to show it to the poor and to the foreigner living in their midst. And both the spirit and the principle of good will appear with teachers outside of Judaism and Christianity. Buddha exalts the principle of mercy and Confucius taught that men were not to do to others what they would not have done to themselves.

What Jesus Did.—And yet in this teaching, too, Jesus began a new day. In the Old Testament the law of love is one among many other laws; in actual practice among the Jews it was obscured by innumerable rules about sacrifices and tithes and washings. Jesus makes it central and supreme. This spirit of love and good will is not one among many duties, it is the heart of a man's life; out of this one spirit of love toward God and man all else must flow. The gift on the altar takes second place; God wants

the spirit of mercy, not sacrifice. Better to leave the gift than to have a brother unreconciled. Further, Jesus set forth that spirit so clearly in his own life and death, and communicated it with such power to his followers, that what had been a word became a life, a life that has steadily grown in the world ever since.

The Law in God and Man

Three Stages in the Knowledge of God.—The law of grace and good will goes back to the character of God, as does all Jesus' teaching. There are three stages in man's thought about God. There is first the pagan stage, where God is power. Whether that power be good or evil men cannot know for sure, and so they try with prayer and gift to win the favor of this uncertain or unwilling God. There is a second stage in which men think of God as just. Men know what they may expect, and that it will be strictly according to desert, good when they have done good, evil when they have done evil. From this stage Jesus led men to the third and highest: God is pure and perfect good will. His gifts of sun and rain come alike to good and evil. No man has sinned so deeply that love and forgiveness do not await his return. Nay, more, he is like the father of the wayward boy going out upon the way: God does not simply await, but searches out his straying children.

Three Stages in Man's Life with Man.—In these three conceptions of God are pictured the stages of man's own life by which he has risen from lower to highest in his association with his brother men. There is the stage of mere might, in which man thinks nothing of others (except his little circle of family or tribe) and seeks all that he can get for himself. There is a second stage, the stage of bald justice, and this is reflected in that law which Jesus quotes. Where men receive good, they give in return. They love the friends who love them. When they make a supper they invite as guests those from whom they expect invitation in return. And when they receive evil,

they return this also in like kind, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." This was the common level of Jesus' day among the Jews, though Jesus declared that it was not higher than that of the Gentiles (Matthew 5. 47). The third stage again is that of Jesus' teaching, and Jesus connects it directly with his thought of God. The rule of God's life is grace and good will; no lower standard will serve for man. You are to be sons of your Father, you are to be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect. To love even where he is not loved in return, to give though men do not deserve, that is the Father's spirit.

The Law of Forgiveness

No Forgiveness for the Unforgiving.—Forgiveness is the first manifestation of this spirit in man. God is incredibly merciful. Without that mercy no man could stand before him. For even when we have done our best we are unprofitable servants. Every day's close finds us in need of the same prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses." But though God's forgiveness is so boundless, he cannot forgive the unforgiving. Here Jesus, always so merciful, draws a sharp line. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses," he says, "neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." No man dare come before God with any other prayer for pardon than this: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6. 12-15). This is, however, no limit to God's grace, but only a true conception of what forgiveness is. If forgiveness were merely wiping out a debt, God could do that for any man and without condition. But forgiveness means God's taking a man into fellowship with himself; it means oneness of spirit with God. The man who holds an unforgiving spirit may be asking God to overlook his sin, but he does not really want forgiveness; for God's forgiveness means his spirit of forgiving in us as well as for us.

The Sin of the Unforgiving Spirit.—In the parable of the cruel servant Jesus sets forth the unforgiving spirit in man and what it means (Matthew 18. 21-35). Here

was a man who owed his king an incredible amount, ten millions of dollars, a debt that he could by no possibility pay. So his master ordered the law to take its course, and, according to the cruel provision of the time, planned to have the man and his family sold into slavery. When the poor wretch fell down, however, and asked for mercy, his master had pity and remitted the whole debt. Thereupon the servant who had obtained this great mercy went out and found a fellow servant who owed him a few dollars. Him he took by the throat and flung into prison, because he could not pay the paltry debt. So Jesus holds up to scorn and condemnation the hard and unforgiving spirit of men.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation.—The right attitude will be very different from this. Because we know ourselves as sinners utterly dependent upon God's mercy, we should be humble in heart and merciful toward all the wrongs and weakness of our fellows. Because we must go to God every day for pardon, we should be ready to forgive our brother seventy times seven—that is, times without number. Nor should this spirit of forgiveness be simply passive, a readiness to pardon when our brother comes. It should be active. We should do all in our power to reconcile our brother, no matter who is in the wrong. God cares more for that than for worship (Matthew 5. 23, 24). As God wants all his children to stand in right relations to himself, as Jesus not merely forgave sinners but went out to seek them, so the spirit of grace and good will will seek to have right relations of brotherly love and understanding with all men.

The Spirit of Good Will

Good Will Without Measure or Limit.—Back of the spirit of forgiveness, and back of all else in the thought of Jesus, should lie the spirit of good will. The wonderful passage of Matthew 5. 38-48 sets forth this ideal, words that the student of Jesus' message needs to turn to again and again. The words have been constantly misunderstood

because men have treated them as a series of commandments. What Jesus is setting forth here is not a new set of laws, but a new spirit. The spirit of our life should not be that of give and take, good for the good, evil for the evil, but a spirit of good will that knows no limit. Like the love of the Father who sees in every man his child, our deep desire should be the good of every man, seeing in every man our brother. The hate of others should not overcome that good will: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you." Nor are there any other bounds which that good will should know. It is easy to love family and friends, but this good will should go out to the man whose skin is of another hue, who does not speak our language or hold our faith, who dwells on the other side of our city or the other side of the globe.

Not Rules, but a Spirit.—Use every chance to show this good will, no matter what it costs. Here is one that strikes you. That is not a great injury, for it has only touched your body. But it will be a real injury if you let him rouse anger and bitterness in you, and drive you to strike back. Better turn the other cheek; you have kept your spirit of good will and you may win him. Let us remember that these are illustrations of a spirit, not assertions of hard-and-fast rules. If you are defending your wife against a drunken brute, then the law of good will may demand something else. Here, as always, it is the spirit that counts.

The First Mile.—One of the expressive figures that Jesus uses to set forth this spirit of good will is that of the second mile. Roman soldiery on the march could compel any man to go with them for a certain distance, giving them help as porter or guide or in other ways. That is the first mile of life which we all know, the mile of compulsion. There is about so much of compulsion in all our lives. We must work or we will starve. A man must care for his family or the law will step in. We must show a certain amount of decency and honesty or society will ostracize us. We must do about so much work or we shall lose our job. That is the first mile, and that is not a matter of choice.

The Religion of the Second Mile.—It is the second mile for which Jesus is pleading. There is where his religion lies, the religion of grace that goes beyond compulsion, that does not ask, "What do men deserve?" or, "What does law demand?" but simply, "What can I do for others?" The employee who gives that thought and interest for which wages cannot pay, is traveling the second mile. The mother, who never thinks of wages nor measures her hours, but only loves and gives, is on the second mile. All high patriotism, all unselfish service, all love and friendship, all heroism and sacrifice, belong to this second mile. Here men forget the hard "must" in the joy of "may," here men forget weariness in the passion of love, and find God, whose rule of life is not compulsion, but grace and mercy. Along the first mile men are servants, along the second mile they walk as free sons in fellowship with their Father. Along the first road men ask about duty, along the second they declare, "I rejoice to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." But the best of Jesus' message is this: a man may take the spirit of the second mile back into the first, and make the spirit of grace and good will the heart of all his living. So doing a man turns even the first mile of duty into a way of freedom.

The Life of Jesus Interprets His Words.—The final interpretation of the words of Jesus must always be the spirit and life of Jesus. It is easy to pervert his teaching by clinging to his words. In one instance, at least, he himself did not turn the other cheek when he was smitten unjustly, according to John's report (John 18. 22, 23). He did not always give what men asked. That would often mean to injure men, and the rule of Christ is love. But on the other hand, if we are to know all the beauty and wonder and power of this spirit of unquenchable good will, we must turn to the picture of Jesus. He must stand before us as we read his words, unwearied in well-doing, undeterred by men's selfishness or ingratitude or enmity, his love, his charity, his mercy flowing on like a healing flood that covers all that is unsightly or evil and purifies all that is unclean. What a lesson to our narrowness as

we let our thoughts review the company of those whom he served and loved!—a Roman centurion of a hated race, a Canaanitish woman scorned as pagan, a hated publican like Zacchæus, some little children in the market place, a blind beggar whose voice could scarcely rise above the din of the crowd, a heart-broken mother, a group of repulsive lepers, a disciple who was waiting to betray him, another who denied him, and at last the city that rejected him and the soldiers whose hands drove the nails. Words are like vessels: it is what fills them that counts. Men had said love before, but Jesus has forever given that word its meaning.

Jesus' Confidence in the Power of Good Will

How Jesus Used It.—But something more lies back of these words, and that is Jesus' confidence in this same good will as the greatest power in the world. It was the power that he himself used. He used it with the poor, the suffering, and the sinful. He won the poor and suffering by his kindly service. He won the sinful not by condemnation, but by his love and mercy. But he used this same weapon against his enemies also. When they had poured upon him the last vials of their wrath, when their hatred had hunted him to the cross, his answer was this same spirit of love and good will.

The Final Hope.—There are times when force is needed. The state must sometimes restrain the man who is dangerous to society, whether criminal or insane. To yield to every wish of every man would be to injure often instead of helping; it would not mean good will. And we ourselves may sometimes have to use physical force. But the real work of the world is not done by force. The real power in the world that builds and saves and lifts mankind is this power of loving good will. That is the power that must be shown at all costs. Sometimes it will show itself in suffering with the turned cheek and the coat that is taken. Sometimes it will show itself in giving to him that asks. But this is the spirit that must come forth, for it

alone can save. It is not only our true life, God's life in us, but it is also the world's only hope.

The Verdict of History.—And history has shown its power. When Jesus went to the cross, loving and suffering instead of smiting his foes, it looked as though all hope for his kingdom was gone. But the cross, the symbol of his unconquerable good will to men, was not the end, but the beginning. From it have flowed in deepening, broadening streams those mighty currents of love and good will that are renewing the earth to-day. Proud Jerusalem went to its ruin, the armies of mighty Rome are long since gone, but the King of Love sits on his throne to-day more securely than ever. Slowly, but surely, his spirit of love and good will is superseding the reign of greed and self-assertion and brute force. And the great world war is only one more witness to the failure of that appeal to selfishness and force which curses those who invoke it even more than those upon whom its blows fall.

Directions for Study

Read the Scripture passages: Matthew 6. 12-15; 5. 23, 24; 5. 38-48; 18. 21-35.

Consider first what Jesus brought that was new on this theme. How did he join this to his idea of God? How did he illustrate it in his life?

Read the story of the unmerciful servant and ask: Why is the unforgiving spirit considered so great a fault by Jesus? Why cannot God forgive those who are unforgiving?

Consider Jesus' picture of the spirit of good will as given in Matthew 5. 38-48. Show how he illustrated it and trusted in its power. Where are we limiting this spirit to-day? Where is this spirit showing its power between men and men, and between nations?

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAW OF SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

In three chapters we have now studied the law of the life with men according to Jesus. Brotherhood was the first word, since we are all sons of one Father, trying to live in his spirit. Reverence was the next word, the regard for every man as man, as son of the Father and of infinite worth. Then came the law of grace and good will, the desire for the good of every man, no matter what he was or what he deserved. Now we take one step further and study the law of service.

The Law of Service

In Jesus' Life.—We have already seen how the law of service was made plain in Jesus' own life. What he taught his disciples he had first worked out for himself. He had faced the question at the beginning of his ministry: as the Messiah should he rule or serve? He gave answer in the lesson that he read at Nazareth:

> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:
> He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
> And recovering of sight to the blind,
> To set at liberty them that are bruised,
> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

At the close of his ministry he turned to those that knew him best and said: "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth." As teacher, as healer, as friend, all his life can be described by that one word, servant. And as he lived, so he died, giving his life in service, that he might do by his death what his life had not accomplished for men.

The Rule of the Kingdom.—To his disciples Jesus declared that this life of service was not exceptional, it was

the law of all life in his kingdom. Clearly he sets the two ideals of life over against each other. In the pagan world power means lordship: "Their great ones exercise authority over them." Power means the right to command others, to make them serve you. That was what James and John were thinking about as they dreamed of the glories of the coming rule of their Master. The other disciples did not think differently; they simply objected because the brothers were trying to get ahead of them. That was the pagan spirit, Jesus said. It was different in his realm. There power meant a better chance to help, and position meant the opportunity to serve. There was still room for ambition, but it was an ambition to be useful; there was a chance for greatness, but the measure of greatness was not what a man got for himself but what he did for others (Mark 10. 35-45).

"I Have Given You an Example."—In the fourth Gospel the message is given in connection with the simple but eloquent scene of the washing of the feet. "So when he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and sat down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me, Teacher, and, Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you" (John 13. 12-15).

The Mark of a Christian

The Essential Demand.—Jesus made service the distinguishing mark of his disciples. God's spirit is grace and goodness, and where that spirit appears in men, there you see the sons of God. Love and service were not new words when Jesus spoke them; great teachers had used them often before. Such teachers, however, had joined these words with endless other obligations as to belief and action. Jesus said, this is the spirit that makes a man like God. The story of the good Samaritan illustrates this. The lawyer agreed with Jesus that love was the supreme and

sufficient law, but it took this story to show just what the law meant. It meant that high office in the church and correct belief about religion were not enough; the priest and the Levite stand condemned. These were men of pure blood and proud of their race, but that did not count. The Samaritan was of a mongrel race, but that did not matter. He did not know who it was that he helped, nor do we; but that did not matter. Only one thing counted, a spirit of loving helpfulness to the man that was in need (Luke 10. 25-37).

The Tie of Christian Fellowship.—Another time he gave the same lesson to his disciples. The disciples had found a certain man who was not of their company and yet was healing men in Jesus' name; "and we forbade him," they reported to Jesus, "because he followed not us." What Jesus rebukes here is the narrowness of those who make religion consist chiefly in belonging to their circle or their church. Those who serve belong to us, declares Jesus. To make men stumble, that is the great sin; but to help men, if only with a cup of cold water, that is to win sure reward. To receive even a little child in the spirit of Jesus ("in my name"), is to receive him (Mark 9. 37-42).

The Basis of Judgment.—But the clearest declaration of this message appears in the great judgment picture of Matthew 25. 31-46. In simple but majestic phrase Jesus pictures that final separation that must take place among men, based not upon any vindictive wrath of God, but simply upon the character of men themselves, that judgment which means the separation of men that each may go to his own. Significant is the principle of separation. Many things that the church has emphasized do not appear here. One principle decides: Did you help your fellow men in their need? And so they pass to right and left. Here are the men who had pity on the hungry and homeless and naked, who visited those in prison, whose heart was big enough to go beyond family and friends and take in the stranger. On the other side stand, not the Jews whom "Christian" nations have hunted, not heretics whom

church or synagogue have cast forth, not pagans who have never heard of Christ, but simply the men who have not shown the Father's spirit in helping their brothers.

A Simple Religion.—How simple and warm and human is this religion according to Christ! Puzzling questions about theology and church organizations and sacraments are left aside. Who cannot understand what Jesus here sets forth: to give the cup of water, to wash the dusty tired feet, to show friendship to a stranger, to have pity on a fellow man? This is Christianity according to Christ.

How Men May Serve God

Worship As Privilege, Not Service.—"But," says some one, "what about the things that we owe to God? What about sacrifices and offerings which men of all times have felt were due to God? What about love and the faith that men should have in God? And what of the prayers and praise that we should bring to him in public service and in private devotion?" Now, faith and love and prayer have their full place in Jesus' teaching, as they had in his own life. That was life indeed, to know God in trust, to walk with him in fellowship. But Jesus did not speak of these as the service of God. Rather this was the way God served men, to show himself that they might trust, to give himself that they might love and pray. All these are God's grace and man's high life, but not man's service done to God.

God Does Not Need Man's Gifts for Himself.—In the most literal sense of the word, there is nothing that man can do for God directly; the only real service of God is the service of men. Psalmist and prophet had seen this long ago. Jehovah does not want sacrifices and burnt-offerings; he has no need of such. "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. . . . If I were hungry I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." Jehovah was not a God demanding things for himself even if he needed and men had them to give; he is a God who gives to men. "For

I spake not unto your fathers . . . concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you" (Psalm 50. 7-15; Micah 6. 7; Jeremiah 7. 22, 23).

Serving God by Serving Man.—How, then, can men serve God if God has no need that men can supply, and no desire except to serve men? The last words give the answer: serving men is the service of God. How real that service is we shall see when we study Christian stewardship; now we note only the fact as seen in Jesus' teaching. Prayer and praise and worship are our privilege, they are for our own need. But the one real service that God asks of us is to serve our fellow men. And now we get the full meaning of Jesus' words in the judgment scene: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."

The Law of Sacrifice

Sacrifice, Pagan and Christian.—The Christian law of sacrifice belongs with the law of service, and is indeed a part of it. First of all, however, we must reject the pagan idea that sacrifice means something by which God gains and man loses. The Hindu mother thinks to please her god by giving what is dearest to her, and so casts her babe into the Ganges. But the pleasure of God is in the good of man, not in his loss. He does not need our offerings to supply his wants, nor do we need to bring them to win his interest. And yet there is sacrifice in Christianity, and that too at its very heart. The cross is not merely the symbol of Christ, but of the life of his followers (Mark 8. 31-37). We gain the Christian meaning of sacrifice by looking at Jesus' own life. His sacrifice was not the suffering of death to appease an angry God; it was, rather, the devotion of his whole life to God's purpose of love for man. And that is what sacrifice should mean for man—the devotion of his life in service.

Giving Is Getting.—Such devotion will sometimes mean death, as it did with Jesus. And yet it is life, and not loss, that Jesus has in mind. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it." The way of life is not by saving but by giving. This is paradox and yet simple truth. The giving that Jesus asks is a giving to service, a dedication of life to a high end. Where does such giving lead? First of all it leads to God. Sacrifice and giving are his nature, and only those who love and give can know him. But all who do so are led into the depths of his life, they become the friends of God. His secrets are open to them, his purpose for the world. His spirit fills them, his love and patience and pity. And that is life. Such sacrificial dedication leads also to the closest fellowship with men. And this too is life. There is, indeed, only one life that is life, and that is love, the life of fellowship with men and God. To possess things is not life, to have power is not life, to know many facts is not life. Now, the sacrifice that Jesus asks is simply a giving ourselves to his end of serving men. Such giving is not loss, but simply the beginning of real living.

> **"For life, with all its yields of joy and woe,**
> **And hope and fear, . . .**
> **Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love."**

Equally plain is it that the life that grasps and holds is on the way to death. Saving is losing. The self-centered life is the dying life, choked with its own wealth, crushed beneath its own possessions. The walls of selfishness that men rear to preserve their goods become the living tomb within which selfish souls waste and shrivel and die.

The Principle of Service To-Day

Service in Christian Missions.—There is nothing that marks off Christianity more sharply from non-Christian religions than its ideal of service. When Christianity enters a new field it comes to serve. That service goes

out to all men. The Chinese coolie feels it and the poor outcast of India, the man whom the high class Brahmin would not for all the world so much as touch, and whose very shadow would spell pollution. For the Christian all these men are but brothers to be served. And that service reaches all life. Where the church goes hospitals and dispensaries spring up; the story of Christian healing round the world is a page from heaven's own book of light that shines against the dark background of greed which has been exploiting the weaker races of the world. There are schools, too, to liberate men's minds, and sanitation, and better knowledge of agriculture and industry, and a respect for human life, and new ideals of home and woman. And the Church of our own land is coming constantly closer to this new ideal of Jesus: not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give its life for its community and the world.

The Ideal of Service in Modern Life.—More wonderful still is the way in which Jesus' ideal of service has molded the common thought of men. Ex-President Roosevelt made telling reference to this change a few years ago in an address in Europe. When a Roman governor went out to rule a province, he said, everybody expected him to plunder the people and amass a fortune in the few years of his office. Now, he declared, we demand of every official that he be first of all a servant. When King George of England was crowned in 1911 in one of the most stately and magnificent ceremonials that the world has ever seen, the Archbishop of York preached the sermon. And the words of his text, spoken straight at the royal couple that sat before him, were the royal words of Jesus: "I am in the midst of you as one that serveth."

The Aristocracy of Service.—We live in an age of democracy, a democracy that is entering the last strongholds of absolutism. And yet what we are doing is not so much to get rid of our nobility as to change it. Once nobility was the accident of birth, and in the form of inherited wealth that is still partly true. In our own day there is an "upper class" of men whose title to that place rests simply upon

superior cleverness or ruthlessness. But all that is changing. Our new nobility is coming to be more and more the nobility for which men qualify by service to their kind. We may count in that class a cobbler like William Carey, or a black man like Booker T. Washington, or a poor immigrant boy like Jacob Riis; but wealth as such or title as such wins no man a place in its ranks. Once men wrote in the hall of fame the names of kings and conquerors who marched to greatness over the prostrate forms of their fellows. But those letters are tarnishing now. "There is a patriciate even in democratic America," said President Wilson not long since. "We reserve the word 'honored' for those who are great, but spend their greatness upon others rather than upon themselves. You do not erect statues to men who served only themselves."

Directions for Study

Read the Scripture references: Mark 10. 35-45; Luke 10. 25-37; Mark 9. 37-42; Matthew 25. 31-46; Mark 8. 31-37.

Review the life of Jesus as a life of service, calling to mind as far as you can the different kinds of people whom he served and the different kinds of service that he rendered.

Next consider the place which Jesus gives to service in his idea of religion. It is the supreme demand made upon his disciples, it is the link that should bind them with others, and it is the final test in judgment.

Consider the question how men can serve God. If God cares most for the welfare of his children, as such a Father would, then what sort of service will he want from us?

In studying the principle of sacrifice, consider how much of the highest good of this world has come by this road. What do these words suggest to you: prophet, martyr, patriot, friend, mother, Christ?

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CHAPTER XIV

THE LAW OF BROTHERHOOD AND THE NATIONS

We have studied the law of brotherhood so far as it applies to individual relations. Now we face larger and more difficult questions. What does this law mean for our social problems? Here are three outstanding questions of our time: industrial justice, race prejudice, and war. Has Jesus any answer for these matters? In this chapter we inquire what his message is for the nations and concerning war.

Some Objections

Is There One Law for Individuals and Nations?—There are those who declare at the outset that the law for individuals cannot apply to the nations. The nation must demand love and loyalty, service and sacrifice from each individual. But the nation itself is above such law; its duty is to assert itself against all others and for its own people. One writer has put it thus: "Christian morality is based on the law of love. Love God above all things, and thy neighbor as thyself. This law can claim no significance for the relations of one country to another, since its application to politics would lead to a conflict of duties. The love which a man showed to another country as such would imply a want of love for his own countrymen. Such a system of politics must inevitably lead men astray. Christian morality is personal and social, and in its nature cannot be political. Its aim is to promote morality of the individual, in order to strengthen him to work unselfishly in the interests of the community."

We Cannot Be Half Christian and Half Pagan.—Such words are pagan, but unfortunately they express the prin-

ciple that has actually governed most nations in the past. Two points must be made in reply. First, we cannot be half Christian and half pagan in our life. The state cannot say to the people, "You follow the Christian law of love and I will follow the pagan law of selfishness." Second: We cannot be half Christian and half pagan in our faith. If the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be not God of the whole earth, then he is no God for us at all. But if this God of love be God of all, then his law of love must rule all, and principalities and powers must own it as well as individual men.

Has Jesus Any Message on the Nation?—More serious would seem to be the fact that Jesus has no teaching about the nation or patriotism or war or international peace. That is true, nor does he discuss the problem of slavery or the woman question or the rights of labor. All this, however, does not disqualify him as guide. What we wish to know is this: Has Jesus those fundamental principles which can be applied to these questions? In our study we must not wrest the words of Jesus and give them meanings that they did not have in his mind. When Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you," and again, "I came not to bring peace, but a sword," he was not siding now with pacifist and now with militarist. But we do need to ask what his fundamental teachings about God and man mean as applied to these matters.

Some Teachings of Jesus

One Father and One Brotherhood.—Turning to Jesus' teachings now, we do not search for any new passages but only for the larger meaning of those that we have already considered. Here is Matthew 5. 43-48. The God of all the earth is a God of good will. Good will belongs thus to the very heart of the world and underlies all its life. So it becomes the rule for all life, least and greatest, and there can be no other. Matthew 23. 8-12 applies in the same way to nations as to individuals. There is only one Master—not Mars, but Christ. There is only one Father—

not of America nor of England nor of Germany, but that God who is the Father of all men equally. And there is one brotherhood—not that of fellow Americans but that of fellow men, the sons of this one Father.

The Stewardship of Nations.—In at least two passages Jesus specifically opposes the idea that a nation is a law to itself, and makes plain that the nation, like the individual, is under the law of stewardship and service. A few of the prophets of Israel had seen this great truth, and it was one of these that Jesus quoted when he drove the traders from the temple. Israel was following this law of national selfishness; she looked on the temple as her own possession, for her own use and glory. And Jesus quotes the word of the prophet: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations." We recognize the fact everywhere to-day, not only in the church but in the state, that a man's possessions are his in trust. He must use them for his family, for the state, for God. But a nation's possessions are just as truly a sacred trust. In this year of 1918, God is saying to America: You have no right to call your possessions your own. Save at your own table, and use your wheat fields to feed the world. Count your liberty not as a selfish possession, but use your strength to help democracy to live in the world, and to insure a lasting peace among men. Israel boasted of her temple and used it for herself. We are no less guilty if we boast of wealth or safety or liberty, and use these only for ourselves. Israel went down as a nation because she was not true to this trust. This also Jesus clearly declared (Matthew 21. 33-43, especially 43). Has any nation to-day the right to expect exemption from such responsibility or such retribution?

Cæsar or Christ

The Failure of Paganism.—One thing should be wholly clear to-day, and that is the failure of the pagan principles which the nations have been so largely following. These are the law of selfishness and the use of cunning and force. We have recognized the practical value of

brotherhood, of peace and mutual helpfulness, among individuals. In this country we have applied it to a great federation of states, some of them comparable in size to countries like Germany, France, and Italy. But for the most part each nation has looked upon every other as rival, if not enemy, uniting in alliances only for a period until it could bring to terms some other power that it feared still more. The result has been destructive rivalries, intolerable military burdens, and at length as the natural and necessary result of it all the great world war. With the issue of the conflict still undecided, one thing is clear: whichever side will win, all sides will suffer loss. It is not simply the terrible loss of life and money. There is the harvest of the crippled, the orphaned, the widowed; the decreased birth rate, the increased death rate, even at home; the terrible growth of tuberculosis, and in some countries of typhus and cholera. Sexual immorality grows, and moral standards are lowered. Crime increases among children. Standards of living fall. Family life suffers. All the resources of men and money are drawn from the great tasks of education and social betterment and human upbuilding and devoted to the one end, of making the most effective machine for the killing of our fellow men. And after the war is done, its burdens remain for long years to keep men back from the real work of human progress. No one should close his eyes to the wonderful devotion and heroism which the war has called forth, nor to the large vision and high ideals with which leaders like President Wilson have sought to animate a people that has been forced into conflict and is fighting for a righteous cause. There are many benefits, too, for which we are not directly fighting, that will come from the great struggle. But all this must not blind us to the terrible meaning of war itself, nor make us forget that our one great object is to destroy war itself. For it is the spirit of militarism, the confidence in war and the glorification of war, which has plunged the world into this tragedy, and it is that pagan spirit that must be defeated and destroyed before we can have a world of righteousness and peace.

The World Is One.—Meanwhile there has been another tendency at work. Brotherhood is not merely a command of God. It is a principle which is grounded in the very nature of life. The life of the world is one, and the farther we progress the more clear does that become. No nation lives to itself. That is true in material matters. It is folly to think that one nation can profit permanently by the injury of others. In higher realms it is even more true. Religion, art, letters, science, these know no national borders. They belong to one world, and are for the good of all. The law of strife brings a temporary advantage to the strong or fortunate. The savage may kill his neighbor and take the other's weapon and booty, but the richer life of man has come only as men have learned to work together. We have worked out the problem of peace and common interest and cooperation within the community and the nation; we must now work it out in the company of the nations. The nations have tried Cæsar, they must now turn to Christ.

The New Nationalism

New Ideals and Old.—What does this mean for America? It means first of all a new nationalism. The old nationalism said, "Our country, right or wrong." The new nationalism says, "Our country, may she always be right; but if she be not right, then let us serve her by helping to right her." We have rightly demanded from foreigners who come to our shores an undivided allegiance, but we have sometimes forgotten our own duty to give them an America that will be deserving of honor as well as of obedience. We must make an America that shall command the respect of these and of all men, that shall be pure in its politics, just and human in its industrial life, and that shall put the power of government at the service of the common man.

The New Patriotism.—Such a nationalism will demand a larger patriotism than before. Across the seas the great war has brought such an outburst of devotion as the world

has never witnessed before. Millions of men have adventured their lives at the call of country. Again and again they have flung themselves by thousands into conflicts from which they knew that only a fraction could return. And now American soldiers are crossing the seas. We have patriotism for time of war, will we show it in time of peace? The enemy is still in our midst. We are fighting for democracy and liberty across the seas, but we have not yet fully established them in our own land. Industrial injustice on the one side, violence and murder on the other, race riots and bloodshed, political corruption, these are a standing challenge to the new patriotism. What a new land we could make if we could command for days of peace the unity and enthusiasm and unselfish devotion which the days of war are calling forth!

The New Internationalism

Our Relation to Weaker Nations.—What do these principles of fatherhood, brotherhood, and national stewardship demand of us in our relation to other nations? Certainly a new internationalism, and first of all in relation to weaker peoples. Toward such three policies are possible: we may use them for our advantage, we may let them alone, or we may protect and serve them. Our past record is not without stain; we need only recall our early relations with Mexico and our treatment of the Indian. The third policy is the only Christian one and is avowedly ours to-day. Whether we stay in the Philippines, for example, must be determined not by our desire for national profit or our unwillingness to assume responsibility, but by the question of the welfare of the Filipinos.

The International Mind.—In respect to other nations, also, the same principle of brotherhood must govern us. The first need is not that of a policy, but a spirit, the "international mind." That mind Jesus must give us. We must listen to him again as he says, "One is your Father"; "all ye are brethren." We must see that that which unites us as men is far greater than that which divides us as

nations. He must purify us from every trace of bitterness and scorn toward other peoples; and he must deliver us from the selfishness that cannot see beyond its own borders.

Negative Virtue Not Enough.—Nor can the nation be content with a merely negative attitude. There are not a few people whose creed is summed up by saying, "Let us keep away from everybody, that we may keep out of war." Now, this nation does not desire war with anyone, and the mass of its people have good will for all. But brotherhood is not isolation, even if we could avert all peril of war in this way. There are other evils besides war. There are other obligations upon a Christian nation than merely that of saving itself. True peace can come only with righteousness, and righteousness and peace will come only as the great nations of the earth move beyond the stage of selfish aggression or selfish indifference to a positive cooperation for common ends. And one of the first ends of such common effort must be the guarding of the weak and helpless against the exploitation of the strong.

Christianity and War

May a Christian Nation Use Force?—Is it ever right for a Christian nation to bear arms? Is it ever right for a nation to use force? Can there be such a thing as a Christian war? There are really two questions involved, and they are quite different. The first is a question of principle: What is Jesus' rule of life? The second is a question of practice: How shall we apply it? Now, Jesus has but one rule of life for nations as for men, and that is the rule of love; a Christian nation, like a Christian man, must always show this spirit. Our problem lies in the second question: Does the practice of love ever demand or permit the use of force? The answer to this may best be given in the following propositions.

1. Sometimes force must be used with individuals for their own sake as well as for the sake of others. A child must be kept back from the fire, an insane man must be

guarded in an asylum, a criminal in a jail. A man might need to strike down another in order to protect child or woman against drunken frenzy or lust. In all such cases the individual restrained is not a full moral personality, and cannot be dealt with purely on the plane of reason. He is, however, still a personal being, and we must follow even here the principle of good will.

2. There may be among nations also, as among individuals, the submoral or imperfectly developed. They may be backward races, or those misled by wrong leaders or wrong ideals. So long as such are present, rational means may sometimes fail, and a state may need to use force in self-defense or in aid of others.

3. There is grave danger in the use of such force and, indeed, in its possession. Nations may be like bullies, imposing upon others simply because they have big fists. The cure for this in each case is not to lay aside the instrument of power, but to gain that spirit and that moral strength that will cause the power to be rightly used. It is exactly the same kind of temptation that assails individual men because they have power (for example, in the industrial world), or that comes with wealth, as Jesus so often pointed out.

4. Side by side with military preparation must go another and higher preparation. Here is the task of church and school in particular. We must develop in our people a spirit of love and good will toward others, a broad understanding, a passion for righteousness. We must seek deliverance from all hatred and prejudice, from false ideals of national glory, from all desire for conquest. Side by side we must cultivate a national mind that is Christian in spirit and ideals, and an international mind that is big enough to care for the weal of other peoples and strong enough to insist that our own land shall always stand for the right.

5. The use of force is always provisional and temporary. It marks a lower stage. It is to be used as little as possible, and to be given up as soon as possible. We may have to shut up a criminal by force, but the real work of making

a man of him must be done by moral influences. The new life of the world, in which the nations shall dwell in peace and righteousness, in which the welfare of each shall be the concern of all, will come not by armies and navies, but by a growing spirit of good will and righteousness.

Directions for Study

Read the Scripture references: Matthew 5. 43-48; Mark 11. 15-18; Matthew 23. 8-12; 21. 33-43.

Review Jesus' teaching about brotherhood, noting carefully the different principles that have been discussed [redacted] involved in this.

Now consider the objections applying to the use of the rule of brotherhood for the nations. There are others that will easily occur to you. Do not some of these rest upon the misconception that regard for others means having no regard for yourself, or that love is a blind rule to be used without reason?

Taking Jesus' principles one by one, ask yourself what they would mean for this country in relation to others. Remember that men may share the same Christian principles and yet differ widely when it comes to application in definite policies.

Finally, consider what Jesus' principles suggest [redacted] regards a right ideal of our own nation and our relation to it.

CHAPTER XV

THE DISCIPLE AND THE WORLD

We have studied Jesus' thought of God and man. We have now to take up his teaching concerning the world. How did he think of this world? What was to be the attitude of his disciples toward this world? How were they to live in it?

Opposing Views

The Love of the World.—It will help us to understand Jesus' teaching here if we first consider two notable attitudes toward the world which men have held. There is first of all the love of the world. Sometimes it appears as a philosophy of life and then we call it secularism. As such it declares that the only real world is the world of sense and time, therefore we should live for this world and get out of it all that we can. More often worldliness is simply a spirit, absorbed either in trying to get possession of things or trying to enjoy them. In either case, the world of things is alone real and good.

The Fear of the World.—Directly opposed to this is the attitude of those for whom the world is wholly evil. It is not simply that they realize that there is evil in the world. The world itself is evil, it is the kingdom of the devil. The natural appetites, social pleasures, business activities, political activities—these are sometimes considered as actually evil; oftener they are viewed as not necessarily evil but as having no moral or spiritual meaning. One fruit of this theory is seen in monasticism, where men flee the world to find God. The Roman Catholic use of the word "religious" is suggestive here.[1] When the Roman Church speaks of "the religious," it always means

[1] See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, article, "Religious Life."

the monks and nuns, those who have fled the world. Of course it is not merely the privileges of the world but its duties as well that are avoided, the obligations to home and state and the world of industry. Common folks, no matter how faithfully and purely they live, are considered as being upon a lower plane because they do business and own property and marry and establish homes. The Protestant Church too is not free from this idea. It appears with people who divide the world into sacred and secular, who are suspicious of play and pleasure, who think of this world as the devil's and cannot find God in its great movements.

God's World

No Fear of the World.—It is a very different opinion that we find with Jesus. First of all, he rebukes by his teaching and life those who fear the world or scorn it, and flee it. For him it is the Father's world, not the devil's, and he has no fear. He prays to his Father as "Lord of heaven and earth." This Father arrays the flowers in beauty, and gives the birds their food. There is evil in the world; he does not explain it, but he knows that it is being overcome. He himself heals men and casts out demons "by the finger of God." And so he walks through the world as through his Father's house, with confidence (Matthew 6. 26-30; 10. 29-31).

No Flight from the World.—Jesus was no ascetic. The Gospel pages reflect his simple pleasure in the beauties of nature, the flowers, the birds, the sprouting grain, the bending harvest, the glowing skies. Nor did he refuse the simple joys of human relations. He loved companions, and had his special friends. He was a guest in men's homes, and he did not shun their feasts. His enemies, indeed, contrasted him here with John the Baptist (Matthew 11. 18, 19). As Jesus did not fear the world, so he did not flee it. He goes apart to pray, but he will not build tabernacles upon the mountaintop and stay there. He comes back from the wilderness to the crowded haunts of men. He is not afraid of the rich, and does not refuse their

hospitality (Luke 14. 1). He even invites himself to the home of a man who represents what we to-day call "predatory wealth" (Luke 19. 2, 5). Nor does he hesitate to take from the rich gifts for his own need (Luke 8. 1-3).

Jesus' Words about Wealth

Warnings and Condemnation.—But if Jesus is not an ascetic, he is even farther removed from worldliness. The love of the world he condemned equally with the fear of the world. We must turn first to Jesus' statements concerning riches. When one considers their number, and how strong and sweeping they are, one realizes that teachers and preachers have passed them over all too lightly in the past. We hear him say: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6. 19, 24). "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Mark 10. 23, 25). Notice the pictures which the Gospels give of rich men. There are three of these. One is from life, the young man whose noble enthusiasm and high purpose dropped to a pitiful conclusion, who "went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions" (Mark 10. 17-22). The other two Jesus drew. There is "a certain rich man," selfish and indifferent to others in this life, yonder in torment. And there is the rich farmer, so wise and prudent in his own eyes, so pitiably foolish in the eyes of God.

Not Rules, but the Spirit.—What is Jesus' teaching here? It is easy to say that Jesus condemns all wealth, all property even, as iniquity, that for those who will be "perfect" the only rule is poverty. But certain things are to be remembered. Jesus did not ask the wealthy Zacchæus to sell all that he had, nor did he require it of those well-to-do friends who ministered to him. It was not by rules that men were to be saved, but by a new spirit. It is not wealth or poverty as such that Jesus is concerned about,

but the life of God in man, and that appears when we study these sayings more closely.

What Jesus Teaches

A False Philosophy Condemned.—First of all, Jesus is condemning a wrong philosophy of life. It was a philosophy common then as it is now. The rich farmer is the great example. For some men the problem of life centers in things; to have money, land, stocks, houses, automobiles —this is the great end; to lack them is the great misfortune. It is not really a question of rich or poor here; the poor in his envy and fear and anxiety may be as much of a sinner, or a fool, as the rich man in his possessions. Once for all Jesus branded that delusion: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12. 15).

It is interesting to hear the echo of Jesus' words from such a man as the late William James, of Harvard: "When one sees the way in which wealth-getting enters as an ideal into the very bone and marrow of our generation, one wonders whether a revival of the belief that poverty is a worthy religious vocation may not be the spiritual reform which our time stands most in need of. We have grown literally afraid to be poor. The desire to gain wealth and the fear to lose it are our chief breeders of cowardice and propagators of corruption. We despise anyone who elects to be poor in order to simplify and save his inner life. The prevalent fear of poverty among the educated classes is the worst moral disease from which our civilization suffers."

Pitying and Warning.—In the second place, Jesus is pointing out the actual danger in which rich men stand. It has been said that Jesus belonged to the party of the poor. That is not true. He belonged to men, not to any party. He showed one spirit toward all: the spirit of love. He had plainly a deep sympathy for the poor. He was himself a laboring man, and he flames at times with true prophetic passion against those that mislead or oppress the

lowly. But his pity is for all men. It is a mark of his greatness that he could pity even the rich.

Divided Allegiance.—The first demand of his higher life was a single loyalty. A man must love God with all his heart, must seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The rich men whom he saw were men of divided allegiance. The young ruler wanted to be good, and wished it sincerely. But that was not enough for Jesus. "You want eternal life; how much do you want it?" With most men nothing acts more powerfully to divide the mind and seduce it from high desire than wealth.

The Danger of Pride.—A second danger of wealth is pride and self-sufficiency. The rich man finds himself envied of others, a most subtle kind of flattery. He finds himself consulted, deferred to, respected, or at least feared. He knows the power of his wealth; it secures the service of men, and commands those goods that all men seem to be striving for. Everything conspires to make the rich man self-appreciative and self-satisfied. But all this, as Jesus saw, strikes at the very root of the higher life. It is the poor in spirit that receive the kingdom of heaven. It is the meek that inherit the earth. Those that hunger and thirst are filled. Men gather possessions, but inner treasures disappear—the high ideals and noble aims with which youth started out. And these men accept the world's judgment and imagine they are rich. That is the "deceitfulness of riches" (Matthew 13. 22; Luke 12. 19).

Hardness and Selfishness.—A third danger that Jesus saw was that of hardness and selfishness. That is what Dives sets forth, and the brothers of Dives are still on earth and still "hear not Moses and the prophets." It is easy for the rich to become hard and suspicious. They meet the clamor for aid on every side. Everybody seems to have designs upon their wealth. They themselves are separated from real want, and cannot so easily feel what it means. Their very conditions conspire to kill off better impulses. The poor, on the contrary, are close to want themselves, and their sympathies are quick.

Men have tried to whittle away the meaning of Jesus'

words about the camel and the needle's eye. Some have changed a vowel in the Greek word for "camel," and so have made it mean "rope." Others have declared that the needle's eye was the little gate for foot passengers that was in the big gate of the city. But the words stand. The rich man can be saved, as Jesus went on to declare, but he saw how hard it was.

The Christian Man in the World

Simple Enjoyment.—What, then, shall be the attitude of the Christian man in the world? (1) There will be a simple wholesome enjoyment of what is good, looking upon all this as God's gift to man. We are coming to see more and more the Christian meaning of natural goods such as health and recreation and money. So far from being evil in itself, money is one of God's great instruments when handed over to his use. To subdue the earth and make it minister to us is a Christian task. A sufficient income is one of the first conditions for lifting a people to a higher plane of living. Recreation is a part of normal human life and indispensable for education, while full physical vigor is a part of God's purpose for men.

Perfect Independence.—(2) There will be perfect independence of soul. The highest in life does not come from money or any of these other gifts, nor can their lack take it away. Instead of such dependence upon uncertain gifts, which make others slaves of fear, the Christian has confidence that what he needs will be given him by God.

The High Aim.—(3) The Christian aims for the highest. He will not let a lesser good stand in the place of a higher. He knows that the good may become the enemy of the best. Sometimes, therefore, he will renounce the good because it stands in the way of the best.

Using the Lesser.—(4) More often the Christian, instead of renouncing the lesser, will make use of it to promote the higher. He will not flee the world, but find it, rather, the place in which to grow strong and to serve. He will learn that this world, with its wealth and poverty, its

labor and joy, its temptations and its encouragements, is God's place for growing men. He will see how this world brings forth industry and loyalty and strength. He will learn how to be strict with himself and magnanimous toward others, to be strong and yet tender, to join courage with patience, to hate all evil and yet love all men.

Directions for Study

Read the Scripture references: Matthew 6. 19-34; Luke 12. 13-21; Mark 10. 17-27; Luke 16. 19-31.

Go over in your own mind the life of Jesus. What was his attitude toward nature? toward the common pleasures of life, especially toward social pleasures?

Now consider the two attitudes first discussed in the lesson, and see whether either worldliness or otherworldliness describes Jesus.

Recall, however, his supreme interest, that of the life of man with God. Is not this, after all, a right kind of otherworldliness, since it lifts a man above all the limitations of this world or dependence upon its goods?

As you study next the question of Jesus' attitude upon wealth, read first of all his words upon this subject. Are they the words of an abstract philosopher, or of a lover of men who knows the real world and is trying to help men?

At the close, try to put constructively the principles that you think should govern a Christian man in his attitude toward material things.

What social evils of to-day come from the greed for wealth?

What principles should be followed in the choice of our recreations?

CHAPTER XVI

STEWARDSHIP AND LIFE

We have considered Jesus' teaching about the world and man's relation to it. It is God's world and a good world. There is danger in its gifts, because men grasp at these things as ends instead of means. Nevertheless, for those who see God and follow him it is a good world, a world in which to love and to serve and to develop Christian character. But there is another and important side to this conception of the world. We shall study it later as the place in which God's kingdom is to be established, and we shall see that man has a part in this. That part we now begin to study under the theme of stewardship.

Jesus' Words about Stewardship

Words from the Last Days.—The greatest single message concerning stewardship is given in the parable of the talents (Matthew 25. 14-30). It was spoken during the last days in Jerusalem, and is one of a group of messages in which Jesus enforces upon his disciples the ideas of watchfulness and faithfulness. Here belong the words concerning faithful and faithless servants and concerning wise and foolish virgins (Matthew 24. 45-51; 25. 1-13). At that time Master and disciples apparently thought that they should see each other very soon again, and this lent urgency to the words. The disciples were servants whom the departing Lord was intrusting with a great treasure and a great responsibility, and he bids them think of the time of accounting.

Other Teachings.—But there are other passages which give the same truth and which are scattered throughout

his teaching. He told them the story of the unrighteous steward (Luke 16. 1-13). He no more condoned what that unfaithful servant did than did the man's master. But this servant was an example in one point: as he was wise and diligent in his wickedness, so they were to be wise and diligent in their goodness. It is not enough to be harmless as doves, they must also be wise as serpents (Matthew 10. 16). They are the salt of the earth, the light of the world. Salt is not here for its own sake, but as a savor; light is not here for itself, but to give light to others. What they are is not enough, but what they do and count for (Matthew 5. 13-16). In these and in other teachings Jesus brings out his great conception of life whose further meaning we now consider.

Two Fundamental Principles

Not Ownership, but Stewardship.—This great teaching can be put in two propositions. The first is this: all that we have has been given us in trust. A great deal has been said in the church about stewardship in our day, but we are still far from grasping the radicalism of Jesus' teaching. Most men draw back from the sweeping proposition of socialism, which, though it does not declare against private ownership of all property, yet opposes private ownership of the means of production and distribution such as mines and fields and factories and railways. As a matter of fact, Jesus goes farther than that here. He declares that there is no absolute ownership of anything whatever. Nothing is held by man in fee simple—everything only in trust. We are trustees, and never absolute owners.

Possession Means Obligation.—If all that we have has been given us, then there follows the second proposition: all that we have we owe. For paganism property means simply power and privilege; for Jesus it means trust and responsibility. We are familiar with these pagan cries today, with the men who say, "This is my money, I shall do with it what I will; this is my business, and no one is to

tell me how to run it." From the standpoint of Jesus only one position is possible: this is God's business, and I must run it for the good of men. Dives was probably quite as good as many a man to-day who pays his debts and keeps the law (or at least keeps out of it by the help of his lawyer), who indignantly asserts his right to run his own business and spend his own money, and who leaves his fortune to children who have not earned it and are not fitted to administer it.

Stewardship as Broad as Life

The Stewardship of Truth.—Simple as these propositions are, they have the widest meaning. They apply to all of life. It is unfortunate that with many people stewardship has come to mean simply tithing. Now Jesus refers to tithing only once, and then it is to condemn those who followed scrupulously the law of the tithe and forgot greater matters. Stewardship refers to all that a man is and all that he has, for there is not one thing that he has not gotten from God, nor one thing for which he is not responsible to God. For example, the disciples had a great treasure intrusted to them in the teachings of Jesus. You are responsible for this treasure, Jesus said; from it, like a good householder (steward), you are to bring forth things new and old (Matthew 13. 51, 52). It is this stewardship of truth and life that lies back of Christian missions. Because Christ has first come to us, we are to go into all the world with him (Matthew 28. 16-20). That is why we are to confess Christ before men (Matthew 10. 32, 33). That truth lies also in the parable of the sower. The seed of the truth has been given to us; we must scatter it, and not hoard it (Mark 4. 1-9).

The Stewardship of Influence.—There is a stewardship of personal influence. The question of character is not an individual matter. We must be for the sake of others. A man's character is a vote that is cast every day for good and God, or against them. A few years ago President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins, wrote an interesting article

on "Five Great Gifts." He began with George Peabody, but he made plain that greater even than Mr. Peabody's benevolent foundations, which are still working, was the good that his example accomplished. Especially in the gifts of John F. Slater, Johns Hopkins, and Enoch Pratt was his influence directly felt. All these together have in turn helped to influence such great benefactions as are connected with the names of Sage, Rockefeller, and Carnegie. Even more suggestive is the fact, given in a letter which President Gilman's article called forth, that back of Mr. Peabody's deed was the influence of a young man, himself without wealth or fame, who persuaded Mr. Peabody to this step and outlined its plan.

The Stewardship of Time.—There is the stewardship of time. There is no more interesting chapter in modern industry than the story of those by-products which often turn the scale between loss and profit in business. So it is with the by-products of a man's life. We forget that Paul's business was tentmaking and that his missions and his letters were by-products. William Carey was a cobbler, and the modern foreign missionary movement was his by-product. With such men the by-product becomes the real business of life. There are strong capable business men to-day, men of wealth and large affairs, who are giving as much time and thought to church and philanthropy as they do to their business. With its great problems at home and abroad the church offers a field that should command the highest gifts and the largest talents.

The Stewardship of Business

The Source of Money.—The stewardship of business is another suggestive theme. How we make our money is as much a part of our stewardship as how we spend it. We are forming a new conscience to-day in this matter. Once we praised men's gifts and did not ask as to their source. Now we see that righteousness must come before benevolence. The business itself belongs to God, and not simply a part of the proceeds. Here is the great steel industry.

Careful investigation a few years ago showed that twenty to thirty per cent of the iron and steel workers were laboring seven days in the week and twelve hours a day. Our questions will not be silenced by gifts of library buildings, church organs, and peace palaces. If God is a real partner, as he should be in every business, then men will come first and dividends second.

Business as Service.—But Christian stewardship in business means more than avoiding injustice. Every business rightly conducted is a service rendered to man, and so a part of Christian stewardship. A study of what Henry Ford has done in Detroit will show not merely employment for thousands at good wages, but in these families more thrift, greater sobriety, and a general wholesome influence. The right conduct of business is a man's first opportunity for stewardship. It is so with a professional man. Many a physician who has little time for "religious" work is yet doing a large amount of Christian service. The career of Justice Brandeis of the United States Supreme Court affords a fine illustration. Years ago he was left a moderate fortune. He decided that the scale of living in his home should remain the same, and that he would serve the public with his talents, if necessary without compensation. In Oregon and Illinois his services, involving great labor without great fees, prevented the ten-hour-a-day laws for women from being declared unconstitutional, and elsewhere he gave other notable aid.

The Spending of Money

What Money Is.—Christian stewardship has to do with the spending of money. And first we need a right conception of what money is. Money is not "filthy lucre." In itself it is not good or bad; that all depends upon the task to which it is set. It may become a minister of hell, degrading and destroying; or it may be a servant of light, bearing life to men. It is a useful servant, though not an easy one to rule. Men who have made it their master have exploited childhood, debauched manhood, defiled woman-

hood, and committed every crime in the calendar for its sake. It is a sharp test for any man's character, but it is also an instrument of almost unmeasured power for good. What is the five-dollar wage which you have just received? It is so much of yourself, of your sweat and muscle and brain. But while you are tied down to one place and one task, the five dollars are not. They will feed hungry children in Belgium or Poland or they will minister to the sick in a Chinese hospital.

The Power of Consecrated Money.—Not everything can be done by money, but it seems as though nothing were impossible when consecrated men and consecrated money went together. We have found that there was money enough to stamp out smallpox and yellow fever. The abolition of typhoid is a simple matter of the wise use of money, and its presence to-day is a disgrace to a city. A prominent writer on health pointed out to a New York audience a few years ago a plan by which new cases of tuberculosis could be made impossible in that city by the moderate sum of sixteen million dollars. Yonder in China are cities by the score and villages by the hundred that have no Christian teacher or preacher. There are hundreds of cities where the healing that comes with the power of modern science and with the spirit of Christ is practically unknown. There are scores of thousands of men and women in India who are waiting at the door of the Christian Church and cannot come in because there is no one there to teach them. Here on this side are men and women, preachers, teachers, physicians, who might be sent, while over there are native helpers who cannot be used because not even the pittance of a couple of dollars a week which would support them is available. There never was such an opportunity for Christian investment as to-day.

The Title to Money.—A man's right to money is dependent upon his use of it. That is clearly the teaching of Jesus in the parable of the talents. No man has any absolute right to property. Society is coming more and more to recognize that. If a piece of land is needed for

the common good, the state may take it over by right of eminent domain. The inheritance tax goes still farther, and is coming to be more and more widely used. A man's moral right to leave money to his children is not absolute, but depends upon whether those children can receive it without injury to themselves and use it for the good of others. The Christian faith is dishonored when Christian men die leaving large wealth to their children and nothing to society.

Not a Law, but a Principle.—How shall the Christian spend his income? There is no ready-made rule on this subject. Christianity is not a religion of law, and we have no more right to enforce the Old Testament law on tithing here than its rules about circumcision and burnt-offerings. As a matter of fact, the strict Jew gave more than a tenth, and the law demanded more. Two yearly tithes were referred to in the Old Testament law, coming from different codes, but both taken as valid by the strict Jew (Numbers 18. 20-32; Deuteronomy 14. 22-26). Deuteronomy 14. 28, 29 provided for still another tithe to be given every third year, in which year the Jew thus gave a third of his income. In addition to all this there were very large freewill offerings. There are men who would be false to plain duty if they did not give more than a tenth. Some of them ought to give largely from their capital as well as income, as Mr. Carnegie and others have done.

Proportionate Giving.—One of the first duties ought to be to set aside a definite proportion of one's income. Giving by impulse is not the highest giving. Selfishness is hard to master. It is too easy to check the impulse. The interests of the Kingdom are too important to be treated in that haphazard fashion. Set aside a proportion and then invest it in God's work as carefully as you invest in your daily business. One business man personally known to the writer gives a fifth of his income as a minimum, and keeps it as a separate bank account, watching his gifts as carefully as he does his other business. By so doing he gives himself with his gift and multiplies its value. What this proportion shall be each man must determine.

If he starts with a tenth, he should certainly give more than that with increase of income.

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Matthew 25. 14-30; Luke 16. 1-13; Matthew 5. 13-16; 13. 51, 52; Mark 4. 1-9; Matthew 10. 32, 33; 28. 16-20.

Our last chapter discussed a man's world; this one has to do with his work in the world. For the Jews that work was keeping certain commandments; for Jesus it was being true to a trust

In your own words state Jesus' conception of stewardship, and the idea of God and the world which goes with this.

Does the possession of the gospel and a Christian civilization bring any responsibility to us as individuals, as a church, as a nation?

Name typical instances in which the principle of stewardship is violated by men (1) in making money, (2) in keeping money, (3) in spending money, (4) in leaving money after death.

Name some kinds of stewardship that are especially needed to-day.

Giving is a form of investment. Name some of these investments which you think offer to the giver the largest promise of return to-day.

When is the best time for a man to give, before or after his death?

CHAPTER XVII

THE KINGDOM AS A GIFT AND A GOOD

No word stands out in Jesus' teaching like the phrase "the kingdom of God." He began his teaching with the word which John had used before him, "The kingdom of God is at hand." He bade his disciples proclaim this when he sent them forth. This was the good news, the gospel, with which he stirred men's hearts. Around this thought his parables center, and it is just as prominent in the teaching of the last days as at first. What did Jesus mean by it?

What Is the Kingdom?

The Rule of God.—The word "kingdom" may have one of two meanings, either the rule of the monarch, or the realm over which he reigns. The latter is the more common meaning, but the former is the meaning of Jesus. By the kingdom of God he meant the rule of God. "Thy kingdom come" and "thy will be done" have for him the same meaning. In most cases the gospel passages gain a richer and fresher meaning if we read "the rule" or "the kingship of God" in place of the words, "the kingdom of God."

The Vision and the Faith.—It was a glorious vision that stood before the soul of Jesus. He lived, as do we, in a world full of evil, which no one felt so keenly as he. Sickness and suffering were on every hand. There were poverty and sorrow. Israel was under the hard bondage of Rome. Above all there was the evil in the hearts of men—their fears and lusts, their selfishness and greed, their blindness and hardness. But beyond all this Jesus saw another day. The rule of God was to come. It was

all a part of Jesus' faith in God. Other men saw the power of evil; Jesus saw the power of God. It was God that filled his soul, it was God's presence that he knew in all things, and God's might stood for him behind and above all things. He knew that God's rule was coming, and the horror of the cross itself could not move him from that faith. In the strength and joy of that conviction he moves through life, and with its burning message he kindles the hearts of men.

Jesus and the Jews.—Now, the Jews had their kingdom hope also. They too expected the overturn of the powers that were then ruling and the triumph of Jehovah. But when we look more closely we see that by the triumph of Jehovah they meant the triumph of Israel, to whom other nations should bring their tribute. Such dreams have no place with Jesus. He is alike unconcerned about the fall of Rome and the glory of Israel. One thing only fills his soul, and that is God. God is to fill this world's life and to rule it. Righteousness and good will, joy and peace—these are to prevail in the earth. His eyes are not upon Israel alone, but upon all men. From the east and the west and the north and the south he sees them coming to enter the Kingdom from which Israel indeed was shuting herself out by her disobedience.

Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven.—Even the ordinary reader will note that Matthew's Gospel uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven," and the other Gospels "kingdom of God." The former phrase occurs in Matthew thirty-three times, while only five times does he speak of the kingdom of God. On the other hand, "kingdom of heaven" is never used in the other Gospels. It is quite evident that the two phrases refer to the same thing, and a comparison of parallel passages in the Gospels confirms this. Which was the original form with Jesus? That is impossible for us to tell, but probably the phrase "kingdom of God." Had the original phrase been "kingdom of heaven," it could hardly have disappeared from the rest of the apostolic writings. How, then, did the form "kingdom of heaven" come in? That is probably to be explained

by the prevalent Jewish reverence which had become almost a superstitious fear, and which kept them from using the name of Jehovah or God, substituting such words as Heaven, or Holy One. So they said "kingdom of heaven" instead of "kingdom of God."

The Kingdom as a Good

The Supreme Good.—The kingdom of God, Jesus declares, is the highest good that can come to man. It was the one great hope that filled his own heart. This coming rule was to include every good that men could wish for. To his hearers he compared it with a great treasure which a man found hidden in a field. No wonder that this man sold all that he had so that he might buy the field and possess the treasure. It was like the pearl discovered by a buyer of precious stones, such a pearl as he had dreamed of but had never seen. No wonder that he sold gladly all his lesser treasures that he might gain this prize. With such words Jesus tried to make men feel the wonder of the hope and the blessing of the promised gift.

God's Rule as Man's Good.—Just how God's kingship is to bring every blessing Jesus does not describe. There were many Jewish writings in that day which told of the coming reign, and they were filled with pictures of enemies overthrown, Israel triumphant, and the saints enjoying marvelous wealth of harvest and almost endless days of life. These things Jesus does not portray. The rule of God means far more than such earthly gifts. On the other hand, the rule of God meant for him something very different from what it means to many to-day. The prayer, "Thy will be done," suggests to most men a burden or a hard demand. With Jesus it is absolutely different because his thought of God is different. His God is pure mercy and good will. The rule of such a God, his triumph in the world, can mean nothing but the highest good of men. Seek this Kingdom, he calls out to men, and everything else will come with it (Matthew 6. 33). "The kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the

world" is Jesus' phrase to describe the glorious reward of the faithful (Matthew 25. 34).

What Is This Good?

The Overthrow of Evil.—What, then, is this great good which the rule of God brings? First of all, the overthrow of evil, not of sin alone but of every power of evil and of all suffering. Jesus saw the beginning of this in his own work. That appears in his challenge to the Pharisees: "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you" (Luke 11. 20). And so he rejoices when the disciples come back telling of their healings: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke 10. 18). The overthrow of evil was the mark of the coming rule.

Forgiveness.—More important as a gift of the Kingdom was the forgiveness of sin. The more spiritual Jews had looked forward to this, that the Messiah was

> "to give knowledge of salvation unto his people
> In the remission of their sins" (Luke 1. 77).

Not the healing of the body but the overthrow of sin was the chief concern of Jesus. His chief task and his deepest joy was the work of reconciling men to God. He sees that meaning in his death, as he speaks to his disciples of "my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." And Luke reports how he declared to his disciples that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations" (Luke 24. 47).

God the Supreme Gift.—The real gift of the Kingdom is God himself. That is why forgiveness has the first place in the Christian message. So long as there is sin, there is separation from God. Forgiveness is no mere wiping out of past scores; it is the breaking down of the barrier between God and man. It is opening the door by which man comes to God, by which God can give himself to man. That has been God's purpose through the ages —to give himself to men. When his rule is fully come,

then men shall know God and God shall be the life of men. Then the gift to the pure in heart shall be fully attained, "they shall see God" (Matthew 5. 8). And here we see how different is Jesus' idea of God's rule. The Kingdom does not mean with Jesus a throne and outward power, but rather this personal fellowship with God.

The Kingdom as Life

The Kingdom Means Life.—From all this it would appear that the rule of God meant in one word the life of men, not mere existence, but the richest, fullest life as God had planned this for them. Just this was the thought of Jesus, for he uses interchangeably these two phrases, "the kingdom of God" and "life." Narrow is "the way that leadeth unto life," he says in one place, and immediately thereafter speaks of entering into "the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 7. 14, 21). The rich young ruler asks what he is to do to inherit eternal life. When he leaves, Jesus speaks of the rich man's difficulty in entering into the Kingdom, and then a little later speaks again of eternal life (Mark 10. 17, 23, 30).

Eternal Life in the Fourth Gospel.—The Gospel of John has dropped almost altogether this phrase that had so large a place in Jesus' teaching. There are only two passages in which the Kingdom is directly referred to. Nicodemus is told that a man must be born anew in order to see the kingdom of God (John 3. 3-5). And before Pilate Jesus declares, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18. 36). Where the synoptists are continually speaking of "the Kingdom," the fourth Gospel uses the phrase "eternal life" (John 3. 15; 4. 36; 5. 24, 39; 6. 40, 54, 68; 10. 28; 12. 25; 17. 2, 3). All this is in line with the general character of this Gospel, which tends to spiritualize the teaching of Jesus and to give the message of Jesus in the forms of thought of the writer. And yet, from what has just been pointed out, there is no radical departure here from the thought of Jesus as seen in the first Gospels. What John does is to set forth one special aspect, the

inner aspect, of the message of the Kingdom. The Kingdom means life.

The Kingdom as a Gift

God's Gift.—The Kingdom is God's gift to men. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12. 32). What man's task is we are to see later. Here we must note the fact that the message of hope which Jesus brought did not rest upon any thought of man's progress or man's goodness or even man's devotion to a cause. His hope was built upon God. The Kingdom was his Father's gift. Because he believed in such a God, mighty as well as merciful, God of heaven and earth, but also Father of men, he believed that the Kingdom was coming, and called on men to believe and rejoice on all occasions.

Directions for Study

Read the Scripture references: Matthew 13. 44-46; 6. 10; 5. 8; Luke 1. 77; 24. 47; Matthew 26. 28; 7. 14, 21; Mark 10. 17, 23, 30; Luke 12. 29-32.

Take the phrase "rule of God" and substitute it for the words "kingdom of God," looking up as many passages as you have time. In some places it will not apply.

If possible, read what is said about the Jewish expectation of the Kingdom in Chapter II of the author's *Life of Jesus*. Recall what we learned as to Jesus' teaching about God. How far does his doctrine of the Kingdom flow from this?

When we pray, "Thy will be done," do we feel that we are yielding something, or accepting something hard? Why does Jesus think of the rule of God as the highest good of men?

Compare Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom as a good with Paul's declaration that the kingdom of God is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." How do they differ?

CHAPTER XVIII

THE KINGDOM AS A TASK

THE conception of the Kingdom with which we have started seems at first sight very simple. It is the rule of God, and it is to come upon the earth as a gift of God. If this be true, then there would seem to be nothing for us except quietly to wait for the time of its appearing. But as we study the words of Jesus, there are other and larger meanings that appear.

GIFTS AND TASKS

Two Kinds of Gifts.—We have studied the kingdom as God's gift; man's work is not to make the Kingdom, man's desert is not to bring it. But there are two kinds of gifts and two ways of giving. There are outward gifts which depend simply upon the will of the giver. A wealthy father can give his boy money and all that money will command. He can buy him books, or send him to college, or let him travel. In all this the boy need have no part; it is simply a matter of the father. There are other gifts which cannot be made in that way, and the highest gifts depend quite as much upon him who receives as upon him who gives. No one can give that boy the seeing eye when he journeys, by which alone he will profit. The father can pay his expenses, but whether he gives the boy an education or not depends upon the boy. When it comes to the highest gifts the principle is even more clear. The father's highest gift to his boy is a right spirit and character, but only the boy himself can make such a gift possible.

Inner Gifts.—The question, then, is this: Is the Kingdom in Jesus' mind an outer gift or an inner one? There is no doubt that the Kingdom was primarily external in the

minds of the Jews. They thought of the triumph of Israel over her foes, of a day of power and rule and glory. It was not so with Jesus. We have seen what were the gifts of the Kingdom with him. He thought of sins forgiven, of men living in fellowship with God, of the overcoming of evil, of a new and glorious life which he called the life eternal. It was the life of God in the world and in men that he saw. Such gifts depend not merely upon the giver, but upon him that receives. Every such gift is at the same time a demand and a task. The good news of God's gift is at every step a summons to men, a call to give, to do, to strive, to live.

The Cost of Forgiveness.—We may see this principle quite clearly by considering forgiveness as the first gift of the Kingdom. That would seem to be the freest gift that could be bestowed. Does it not depend absolutely and solely upon the giver? Not so with Jesus. Forgiveness is a matter of the mutual relation between God and man. It is a uniting of that which has been broken by sin. It is not canceling a punishment, but forming a fellowship. And that costs. It means repentance; not a momentary remorse, but a hating of sin and a turning to righteousness, the about-face of a man's heart (Matthew 18. 3, 4). God can give himself only as man gives himself. To call men to such repentance, therefore, Jesus conceived to be a chief task (Luke 11. 29-32), and the demand for repentance he held up constantly as the condition of forgiveness and life (Matthew 11. 20-24; Luke 15. 7, 10, 21).

God's Rule as Our Task

The Outward and the Inner Rule.—That the Kingdom is a task we shall see most clearly when we go back to our definition of the Kingdom as the rule of God. There are two ways in which God rules in his world. In one case the rule is external and absolute; the obedience is equally absolute. That is in the world of things; the stars that move unerring in their courses can never go astray. The other realm is that of persons; here God's rule must be

within. In this world of persons God rules only as men know his will, and love his will, and freely carry it out in their life. The Jews laid stress upon righteousness as the condition of the coming of the Kingdom, but the Kingdom itself lay elsewhere. With Jesus the doing of the will of God is the very essence of the Kingdom. When he says, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done," he means the same thing; and so also when he bids men seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness. The whole Sermon on the Mount is a witness to this; it is Jesus' call to a higher righteousness of life, and that righteousness is simply the rule of the Spirit of God. Without such righteousness men cannot even see the kingdom of God (Matthew 5. 20). The simple test is whether a man is actually doing the will of God, whether his life is actually showing the fruits of righteousness (Matthew 7. 15-23).

Who Are My Brothers?—Most effectively and simply is the truth brought out in Matthew 12. 46-50. Here Jesus leaves the word "kingdom" and goes back to that picture of the family which most truly represents his thought of God and man and their relation to each other. Some one had reported that his mother and brothers were without and were asking for him. "And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." Being in the Kingdom means doing the will of God; that is the final test.

Eternal Life as a Task

What Is Eternal Life?—We have seen that Jesus used still another figure to set forth the Kingdom as a gift; he speaks of it as eternal life. Now, eternal life, it is needless to say, does not mean simply unending life. It is quality, not duration, that counts here. Sometimes, indeed, Jesus simply says life. This life, of which men have the beginnings here, is nothing other than fellowship with God, the life in which God gives himself to men. What is the life of God in us? Something given to us?

Yes, but always something lived by us at the same time. No man really has God's love who is not loving his neighbor. No man has God's forgiving grace who is not himself gracious and forgiving. God's great gift of holiness is not a "thing" that is given to us, or something that is done to us, it is something that we have only as we live it. From the very first step this kingship of God is something to be lived out.

The Cost of Friendship.—We see that plainly again, when we think of this Kingdom, or life, as a fellowship, or friendship. A friend means much more than a patron. A patron makes gifts, a friend bestows himself. It may not cost anything to take gifts from a patron; to enter into a friendship always costs something, and may demand everything. Friendship is always mutual; the best and strongest and richest friend always asks something in return even of the man who seems to have little to give. Friendship means fellowship, communion, having something in common. No friendship is so gracious or gives so much as the friendship of God; but it asks also. Every friend must have a place in our life, and this Friend must have the supreme place. He must come in where we keep our ideals, our deepest hopes, our strongest passions, our final purposes. His friendship will shape and form all these. We see at once that the friendship, so gracious a gift, becomes a great task. Nothing so demands a man's whole thought and will and strength as this free gift of the friendship of God.

The Summons of Jesus

What He Asks of Men.—All these considerations make clear to us the ethical note in the teaching of Jesus, and how it differed from the teaching of the Jews. Like them, he believed that the coming Kingdom was to be the gift of God; unlike them, he saw that it was also a task for men. He applies this to the individual. Men are not to sit with folded hands, waiting for the Kingdom. It demands eager desire, the hunger and thirst for righteous-

ness, a determination like that of men who take a city by storm (Matthew 5. 6; 11. 12). Men must strive to enter in, must enter in by a narrow gate (Luke 13. 24; Matthew 7. 13, 14). The Kingdom must stand first in men's desires, it must be the only master of our life, and not the most precious of our possessions may stand in the way, not the right hand or the right eye (Matthew 6. 33, 34; 5. 29, 30). Clear and strong he makes the final test. The men of the Kingdom whom the king shall own are those who do the deeds of the Kingdom: thorns cannot bring forth grapes, good trees must show good fruits, the men of the Kingdom will not be those who said, "Lord, Lord," but those who did the will of the Father (Matthew 7. 15-23).

The Responsibility of the Nation.—The parable of the vineyard and the wicked husbandmen enforces the same truth, but applies it to the Jewish nation as a whole. In some ways this parable does not seem to fit in with the rest of the teaching about the Kingdom. Instead of being a gift such as we have considered the Kingdom is rather a rule or authority that has been handed over to Israel. But the contradiction disappears as we look more closely. It is not an outward rule of which Jesus is thinking, but rather that gift of God's truth, that revelation of his will and purpose, with which God had intrusted Israel. He had given it for the good of others, and the gift was to be a task. They had taken it as a private possession and privilege. And so the Kingdom of God was to be taken from them and given to others.

The Kingdom and the Nation.—That same question and that same task face us as a nation. There is a sense, with us as with the Jews, in which we have already been given the kingdom of God. God has given us his truth, has revealed his will. His rule is present where there is true democracy in government, where there is righteousness in business, where there is good will among men. But the task looms big before us of letting his rule come into all our life and affairs as a people. If we fail here, if his will is not done in our life, if his King-

dom is not furthered among the other nations by our devotion and service, then "the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

Directions for Study

Read the Scripture references: Matthew 6. 10, 33; 7. 15-23; 21. 33-43.

Review the last lesson, calling to mind Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom as a gracious gift of God to men, and noting the different forms in which this gift appears.

Run through the lesson discussion, and bring together all the Bible references that you find in which Jesus emphasizes the side of duty and demand and responsibility. Note that in some of these he speaks definitely of the Kingdom; there are others in which the reference to the Kingdom is implied. Recall other passages and parables in which this part of the message of Jesus appears.

Now consider how these two sides belong together. Some gifts do not cost us anything. How is it with the highest gifts? with the gifts of the Kingdom?

In what part of our personal life is it hardest to live out the kingdom of God? In our home, in our business, in our friendships, in our inner thoughts?

With what special gifts and privileges has our land been endowed? What are some of its special responsibilities in relation to the coming of the Kingdom?

CHAPTER XIX

THE KINGDOM AS INWARD AND OUTWARD

To say that the kingdom of God in Jesus' teaching means the rule of God seems very simple. And yet in this thought of the rule of God Jesus includes all his hopes of the future, all his thought of what God would do, all his ideals of what men should be. Because this idea includes so much, we have had certain large differences of opinion among students as to its meaning, differences which came mainly because men had over-emphasized one side or the other of this rich conception. One of these broad differences appears in this lesson.

The Kingdom as Inward

The Question.—Is the kingdom of God inward or outward? Is it something purely spiritual, or is it also visible? Earlier Protestant thought tended to emphasize the former idea, to think of the Kingdom as simply a spiritual fact in individual experience. Modern thought lays more stress upon that which is social and visible, upon a new social order with a transformation of industry and government and all the life and institutions of men. What is the teaching of Jesus?

An Inner Gift.—Our first impression is that the kingdom of God is inner and individual with Jesus, and this is borne out by various considerations. In the first place, the gifts of the Kingdom as we have studied them are primarily spiritual. There is the forgiveness of sin and the overcoming of evil in men's lives. There is God's gift of himself to men in love and fellowship. And there is the significant fact that Jesus uses the term "eternal life"

as meaning the same as "kingdom of God." The kingdom of God, then, is a new and higher life of man.

The Nature of the Kingdom Seen in Its Children.—What Jesus says about those to whom the Kingdom belongs also indicates its character as spiritual. The Beatitudes do not tell how we are to earn the Kingdom; they describe rather the kind of people to whom the Kingdom belongs, the real sons of the Kingdom. But to describe the "sons of the Kingdom" is nothing else than describing the Kingdom itself. This purity of heart, this humility of spirit, this mercy and peace and passion for righteousness, this is what really constitutes the rule of God, his Kingdom. The Kingdom then is something within. The same truth appears in what Jesus says about being like a child in order to enter the Kingdom (Matthew 18. 3, 4). Because the Kingdom is above all an inner, spiritual life given by God it requires the spirit of a child to receive it, the spirit of humility and openness and trust.

The Kingdom in the Midst.—Especially striking is the passage, Luke 17. 20, 21: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you." It makes little difference if we take here the translation suggested in the margin of the revised version, and read "the kingdom of God is in the midst of you," which is perhaps the more probable meaning. The thought would then be this. The Pharisees had asked him when the Kingdom was to come. You are expecting something striking, answers Jesus, which the eyes of all may see. Let me tell you, the kingdom of God is already in your midst and you do not even know it. They did not know it because they were looking for something external, political, and spectacular. They did not see its beginnings in the Spirit of God working through Jesus in teaching and healing and forgiving, and showing itself in the men who were already turning to the Kingdom.

Jesus Shows the Nature of the Kingdom.—The conclusion that the Kingdom is inward is borne out by the

method of Jesus' life and work. In his temptation he sets aside definitely the ideas of rule and power, and chooses the way of a servant. Love and good will are his instruments. Every suggestion of political or other outer power he puts aside; he wants to rule from within. And it is the inner spirit that he emphasizes with men. One passage after another in the Sermon on the Mount points out that the righteousness of God must be inner. Especially significant is the fact that ordinarily Jesus sets forth the relation of God and man not under the figure of king and subjects, but of Father and children. But when you ask what makes God our Father, and what makes us his sons, it is to the inner spirit that Jesus points. God is Father because he is merciful and forgiving and good; we are his children only as we show that same spirit (Matthew 5. 43-48; Luke 15. 11-32). The meaning of God's kingship is not different from that of his Fatherhood, and his kingdom among men is nothing else than the life of men as his children. And so we are brought to the conclusion again, that the kingdom of God is an inner and spiritual reality.

The Kingdom as Social and Visible

The Kingdom Is Outward Also.—To stop with the thought of the Kingdom as an inner reality, however, is to miss the full meaning of the message of Jesus. That is what those have too often done who have insisted upon the spiritual character of the Kingdom. They have felt it necessary to deny its social meaning, its bearing upon the institutions of life and the larger relations in which men live. Thus the spiritual has come to mean something partial and narrow and weak, and the kingdom of God has come to mean the rule of God in heaven but not on earth, or at least only in a little fraction of man's life here. Nothing like this is involved in Jesus' teaching. The Kingdom is a rule of the spirit, but this spirit is to rule all the life of the world.

The God of Jesus is God of All.—This follows first from Jesus' thought of God. The Kingdom is the rule of God,

and the God of Jesus is the God of *all* life. It is upon this thought of God that Jesus rests his hope of the Kingdom. He prays to him as "Lord of heaven and earth." He declares that "with God all things are possible." He bids men "fear him," and rebukes their anxiety because it shows a fear of some other power than that of God. His heart is filled with joy because this God is some time to rule all. True, that rule is to be from within, through men's faith and love and free obedience; but it is still to be his rule and it will extend over all. Some time greed and oppression and war shall cease, for his will shall be done in all things. No one can share Jesus' faith in God and think other than this about the coming Kingdom. God is one God and the world will not always be divided as it is to-day between the rule of good and evil.

The Spirit as a Social Spirit.—The same result follows if we begin with man's side of the Kingdom instead of God's. The Kingdom is God's rule in men, the rule of a new spirit. Let us ask now what the nature of this spirit is and what it involves. First of all it is a social spirit, and so it cannot remain within but must show itself in the life of man with his fellow men. There are those who think that a "spiritual" religion is one that takes a man away from his fellows so that he may give himself wholly to God. With Jesus a spiritual religion is essentially a social religion. The men of the Kingdom, in whom is this new spirit, will, of course, pray just as Jesus prayed; but when Jesus comes to lay down the rule of the Kingdom life, he does not refer to prayer and meditation, but speaks of the love and service of men (Mark 9. 35; 10. 42-45). The real way to serve God, he teaches, is to serve men, and the way in which we treat our brothers in need here is to be the final test of our possession of the spirit (Matthew 25. 31-46). In the teaching of Jesus spiritual means social.

The Spirit is Righteousness and Must Rule All Life.—This spirit is also a spirit of righteousness. Its prayer is, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." Its supreme ambition is "his kingdom and his righteousness" (Matthew

6. 10, 33). That spirit must show itself in certain ways. The righteousness will begin within, but it must extend to every part of a man's life (Matthew 7. 15-23). So far from protesting against a religion that meddles in business, this man will make it his first interest to ask what God's rule in his daily business means. It is easier to say "Lord, Lord" on Sunday than to remember the Sermon on the Mount on Monday; but the supreme test still remains, "he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." Not only that, but the man who seeks first his Kingdom and his righteousness cannot rest until that righteousness obtains in all the life of the world, inward and outward, individual and social. The rule of God begins as an inner spirit, but so far as it is a real rule it must show itself in all the life and institutions of men. Some of this life is individual, and each man can determine it for himself. Some of it is social, that is, it can be determined only by men acting together. It is by this common social action that the organization of business and the conduct of the state are determined. But it still remains our task as Christians in these latter matters, however hard it may be to bring about, not to rest content until the will of God is done on earth.

The Kingdom as a Fellowship

The Kingdom a Brotherhood of Those That Do God's Will.—There is still another way in which the Kingdom transcends the inward and individual and becomes social and outward, so that it may be seen by men. That is through the company of the disciples of the Kingdom. If the Kingdom is present where God's will is being done, then the Kingdom will correspond in a general way with those who do this will. Moreover, these men of the Kingdom will not be so many individuals standing alone. The life of the Kingdom is a life of brotherhood, showing itself in love and service. As such it must draw these men together. Such a Kingdom inevitably means a visible fellowship, though one resting on spiritual grounds.

This Brotherhood Seen in the Gospels.—All this we find reflected in the Gospels. While there is nothing in them about the organization of a church, yet there is a natural coming together of the disciples of Jesus, the smaller company of the twelve who were the permanent companions of Jesus, and the larger group that changed and shifted. For Jesus the disciples form the anticipation of the coming Kingdom, the beginnings of its realization. He speaks of them as the salt of the earth and the light of the world, as the leaven which shall yet permeate the whole lump (Matthew 5. 13-16; 13. 33). He sees in their life a new order in contrast with the selfish kingdoms of the earth; "it is not so among you," he declares (Mark 10. 42-45). The old organizations of human society are to be replaced by a new community, where men shall know themselves as brothers, as children of one Father, where the controlling rule of life shall be unselfish service, and in which all nations shall participate.

The Meaning of the Social Service Movement in the Church.—There are many who look askance at the church's interest in social service and feel that real spiritual religion is being lost, that we are busying ourselves with external things and losing sight of that inner life which counted for everything with Jesus. As a matter of fact, this movement is vitalizing and spiritualizing the work of the church to-day. Note some of the fundamental ideas that underlie this movement, and consider how far they agree with the teachings of Jesus and reflect his influence.

(1) All life is sacred. All a man's life belongs to God. Not all life is equal in importance, there is an inner and an outer; but the rule of God must go to every part.

(2) It is a man's business to Christianize his whole life, and it is the business of society (of men living together in a community, in a nation, in a world life) to Christianize all their relations.

(3) The way to make a better world is to make better men, but the converse is also true: The way to make better men is to get a better world. It will not do to save a few drunkards and let the saloons remain open, to give a little

charity and let men work at starving wages, to try to save children by one hour in the Sunday school while they live in moral and physical filth the rest of the time.

(4) The truest spiritual life is social, first as the life lived with God, then as the life lived with men. When a man shuts himself off by himself he dies; when he gives himself to others he lives. It is in his life with others that he really lives, in worship and prayer, in home, in state, in business, in social fellowship, in personal service.

(5) It is because this social life counts for so much that it is of the greatest importance that we Christianize that social order and those social institutions in which this life is expressed: church, home, state, industry, and recreation.

Some General Conclusions

Some Common Errors.—This consideration of Jesus' teaching shows the error of some rather common opinions. (1) That idea of the Kingdom is wrong which identifies it with the church. The church with its fellowship, its worship, and its service is an important part of the Kingdom, is its very center indeed; but the Kingdom is larger than the church. Wherever there is righteousness and love and truth, there is the rule of God, and the kingdom of God is simply his rule. That rule may be found in a factory or a legislature as truly as in a prayer meeting. (2) The kingdom of God is not a matter of external rule or of outward organization of any kind. That is the error of Mormonism. That was the mistake of some sects at the time of the Reformation. That was the kind of kingdom to which the Jews looked forward. That is still the idea of some who look for Christ to reestablish the Jewish state, to set up a political organization, and to rule in bodily presence and from an earthly throne at Jerusalem, dominating the world by visible splendor and power. (3) It is a mistake to make the kingdom of God purely inward and individual, setting off a little section of the world and calling it spiritual, while the great activities and interests of business and state are put aside as secular. The rule

of God for Jesus was moral and spiritual, but this spirit was to dominate all life.

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Matthew 18. 3, 4; 5. 3-9; Luke 17. 20, 21; Matthew 6. 10, 33; 5. 13-16; Mark 10. 42-45; 2. 19.

Review the lessons that we have had thus far on the Kingdom. Keep in mind the simple thought with which we started of the Kingdom ■ the rule of God, and note how the various aspects of this great idea spring from this central thought.

Consider the Kingdom first as an inner spirit and life, reading the first passages noted above, including that in Luke 17. Consider the need of emphasizing this and the constant danger of making the Kingdom something external.

Now study the remaining passages, with the discussion given above. Note that if we take this spirit of the Kingdom in the sense in which Jesus meant it, it will at once lead ■ out into all the life of the world.

What are some parts of our modern life where the rule of God is especially needed? How far are the modern social service movements a fruit of the spirit and the teachings of Jesus?

CHAPTER XX

THE KINGDOM AS PRESENT AND FUTURE

The many-sided teaching of Jesus about the Kingdom has given rise to another controversy. Is the kingdom of God already here, or is it wholly in the future? It is yet to come, say some; it is to appear at some future day through some mighty deed of God, which shall bring to an end this present age and bring about a new earth. It is already here, say some; it is here wherever God's will is being done, and though it is not yet perfected, it is slowly but surely moving on to completion. Words of Jesus can be cited for both positions. We will consider them in turn.

The Kingdom as Future

The Kingdom Is to Come.—The message with which Jesus begins his work refers to the Kingdom as that which is to come. "The kingdom of God is at hand," he declares (Mark 1. 15). It is near, but it is yet to come, and the glorious news of its coming is the burden of his word. For this he bids men pray, "Thy kingdom come." He bids them look forward to the day when they shall hear him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25. 34). He describes how men shall "come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom," and how the righteous shall "shine forth as the sun" (Luke 13. 29; Matthew 13. 43).

The Kingdom as Near at Hand.—It is quite clear that the coming of this Kingdom seemed to him very near. It is "at hand." There were some standing by, he declared one day, who should not see death till the kingdom of God was come with power. "This generation shall not pass away," he said at another time, "till all things be

accomplished" (Luke 21. 32). And at the Last Supper he declared, "I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come" (Luke 22. 18). All this indicates a kingdom yet to come, though near at hand.

The Kingdom as Already Present

What Jesus Saw and Did.—This, however, is not the most distinctive side of Jesus' teaching. We have here simply another illustration of the fact that Jesus' conception of the Kingdom is too rich to be confined in a single formula. The ministry of Jesus begins with the proclamation of the coming Kingdom, but it does not end there. He does not simply repeat these words and then wait for that day to come in which God shall overthrow all evil and rule alone. Nor does he, like John, simply call the people to repentance. Under his own hand he sees a work begin, in which evil is already being overthrown and the power and rule of God are shown. He forgives men and heals them. He leads men into fellowship with God, bringing God into their lives. And so he gives them the strength and the peace which only the rule of God in men can bring (Matthew 11. 25-30). He begins gathering about him a group of men whose hearts are open to God, and who share this spirit which marks the rule of God.

Three Facts That Show the Kingdom Present.—But all this is nothing less than the kingdom of God. These are only the beginnings and evil is still here, but here are three notable facts to show that the will of God's rule is already here: (1) The power of evil is being broken. (2) The gifts of the Kingdom are already being given to men. Those gifts we studied in Chapter XVII. We saw there that for Jesus the Kingdom lay not in political power or outward splendor, but in sins forgiven, in fellowship with God, in the spirit of love and good will. (3) The Kingdom as a fellowship of the children of God is already here.

The Overcoming of Evil.—Jesus saw the beginning of the Kingdom first of all in the breaking of the power of

evil: in the forgiveness of sinners, the healing of men's bodies, and the casting out of demons. In his own vivid picture fashion he expressed his joy when the disciples came back and told of their victories: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke 10. 18). To the Pharisees he declared that his work of casting out demons was a sign that the kingdom of God was come upon them; not that it was near, but that it was already here. Significant are his words in the Nazareth synagogue. His work of teaching and healing and forgiving had been going on for some time before he returned to his boyhood home. There he read the passage in Isaiah 61 which told of the Messiah's work, and began his comment with the word: "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4. 21). What the prophet had foreseen was now present. And that is his message to John the Baptist, in words that clearly refer to Isaiah 61. 1 and 35. 5 and imply their fulfillment: "Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them" (Matthew 11. 4, 5).

The Children of the Kingdom.—In other passages Jesus speaks of men who are already in the Kingdom. He tells how the publicans and harlots are pressing in (Matthew 21. 31, 32). He tells of the new day that has come since the time of John the Baptist; before that men looked forward to the Kingdom, now eager men are taking it by force (Matthew 11. 12). He declares that his disciples have no reason for fasting; they are sons of the bride-chamber, and the bridegroom is with them. The figure of the bridegroom and wedding feast was recognized by the Jews as Messianic, and here again Jesus is speaking of the King and the beginnings of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom as Both Present and Future

The Beginning and the End.—The Kingdom for Jesus is both present and to come. In a world of selfishness and

suffering and all manner of sin, he held that he who was over all and in all was good, and believed that some time this God was to prevail in all the earth. But the beginnings of that rule he saw in his own time. It was not simply that there was some love and righteousness in the world, as there had always been, but he saw that his message and his work were even then beginning the new age. A new light and power were already at work.

The Lesson of the Mustard and the Leaven.—This paradox of a kingdom that is both present and future is solved by certain of Jesus' own sayings. In one of his most beautiful parables Jesus compares the kingdom of God with the growing grain (Mark 4. 26-29). A man casts his seed upon the earth and then goes on about his work day after day. But the seed itself grows quietly and surely until at length the glorious harvest is ready. So, silently but surely, the kingdom of God grows by its own forces. Something of the same thought is present in the parables of the leaven and the mustard seed. Here, as elsewhere, Jesus puts the same thought in parallel sayings (Luke 13. 18-21; compare Matthew 13. 44-46). Both express the same truth, the silent but sure growth of the Kingdom, with this added thought, that what is now so small and obscure shall yet become great before men; the tiny mustard seed shall become a tree, the leaven shall permeate the whole lump, the small shall become great, the hidden shall become manifest. The beginnings of the Kingdom are small and unrecognized at present, but it will come nevertheless.

The Principle of Development.—But the most significant fact about these parables is the principle of life and growth that Jesus uses to set forth the Kingdom. The Kingdom is something that lives and grows like the grain, the mustard seed, and the multiplying leaven. We have something here very much the same as that idea of development which plays so large a part in our thinking to-day. We have learned to regard all life as under this principle. Whether we study the physical man or the mental and spiritual man, whether we consider the state or the home

or industry, all things human have come to be by process of development. This does not exclude sudden changes, crises, and revolutions in the life of society as of the individual. But we see that even these had their long and quiet preparation, and in turn work out their great consequences for after years under the same law.

If this be true, then we can see how the Kingdom can be present and yet to come. That is true of all life because it is all under the law of growth. The living thing is always present, and yet it is still to come. Is this boy a man, or is he not a man? He is both, we say, or rather he is a man in the making. Is this man a Christian or not? He is a Christian so far as he belongs to Christ; he is not yet a Christian so far as he fails of reaching the high goal of the spirit of Christ. We must say of him, as of the best of men, "He is a Christian in the making." So we say of the Kingdom: it is here, and it is still to come, because it is a living thing that is growing on to fullness.

The Coming of the Kingdom

A Question of Dispute.—The question as to just when the Kingdom is to come and under what circumstances has been long a question of dispute. Most Christian thinkers of to-day refuse to be dogmatic on this point. They hold to two convictions. One is the assurance that the rule of God is coming upon earth; the other is that it is coming by means of those spiritual forces that are working in the world to-day. The details of time and manner they feel are hidden from us.

Premillennialism.—An opposing position is held by a small but aggressive group in some sections of the church. These people have an elaborate theory of the coming of the Kingdom. They expect the literal fulfillment of all the Jewish hopes set forth in the Old Testament. The Jews are to return to Palestine. They are to become a political power. Jesus is to return in bodily form and is to rule as the political as well as spiritual head, a throne being set up in Jerusalem. The world is to be saved not

by the preaching of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit as seen to-day, but by the glory and power of this outward and visible appearance of Jesus. This reign of Jesus, in which all evil is to be overthrown, is to last for a thousand years.

No Definite Answer from the Gospels.—Almost all of these ideas are gotten by a literalizing of the Old Testament and indirectly from Jewish writings of later times. There is no definite teaching upon the subject in the Gospels.[1] The thousand-year reign is mentioned but once in the New Testament, and this in a book whose visions and symbols make it one of the most obscure of writings. The early church clearly expected the immediate and visible return of Jesus. This expectation was not fulfilled. It is apparent that the manner as well as the time of the establishment of the Kingdom was hidden from the disciples.

The Real Issue.—The real question is simple: Is the Kingdom to come from without or from within? It is God who is to establish the Kingdom, that is clear. But is he to do this from without, by some act of sheer power, by some outward manifestation of splendor and glory in connection with a visible return of Jesus? Or is the Kingdom to come from within, by the word of his truth and the work of his Spirit in men's hearts, by his spiritual power transforming men's lives?

Light from the Nature of the Kingdom.—Here the Gospels give us real light. They show us Jesus' conception of the Kingdom as a spiritual power and life. If the kingdom of God is moral and spiritual, it can only come in moral and spiritual ways. No external splendor or power can bring it, it must come as a life within. And Jesus' own way of work clearly shows this. He refused the way of power and glory for the winning of men, as the temptation story makes plain, and took the road of truth and love and service.

Light from History.—Christian history, through which

[1] For a discussion of the return of Jesus and the so-called apocalyptic passages of the Gospels, the reader is referred to the author's *Life of Jesus*, Chapter XIX.

God speaks to men, confirms this truth. Slowly but surely the kingdom of Christ has been advancing, and the progress has always been in one way. It has been a progress of truth and life, the work of a Spirit moving in men. The Spirit of God using the truth of God has gradually extended the sway of that spirit of Christ whose rule is the mark of the kingdom of God. It has been seen first of all in growing numbers won for Christ, then in the way in which the spirit of Christ has been changing the life of men. Autocracy is yielding to democracy. Slavery has been swept away. Ancient evils like the social evil are being fought as never before. Temperance reform has marched with rapid stride. China has shown what can be done with the even greater evil of opium. There is a new sense of industrial justice that grows stronger every day. The spirit of mercy and help toward the unfortunate of every kind was never so great, the spirit whose pre-eminent place Jesus set forth in Matthew 25. 35, 36. These words are written in the period of the world's greatest war; but the most striking feature of that terrible struggle is the determination of the leading nations to make this the last war. Evils are present in the world, dark and terrible and mighty, but the growing spirit of Christ has wrought three great results. First, men see evil and are facing it as never before; there is a new conscience. Second, humanity as a whole never had higher ideals than it has to-day, ideals of justice and brotherhood and love, and the master of those ideals, the master of the conscience of men is Jesus Christ. Third, men never had so firm a hope as to-day in the final triumph of good and the coming of the rule of God.

The Christian Hope.—The Christian hope should have a larger place in Christian thought. It should be for us, as for the early church, the spring of confidence and joy. Back of all differences of opinion there are certain central truths upon which we can stand together. (1) The kingdom of God is coming. (2) That Kingdom will mean the rule of the spirit of Christ in all the life of the earth, for Christ is the revelation of the heart and the will of

God. (3) It is our great task to preach his gospel, to live his life in the service of men, and to work for the rule of his spirit not only in men's souls but in all the relations and institutions of earth. (4) The Kingdom itself, in every step of its coming as in its final triumph, is God's gift. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Mark 1. 15; 2. 19; 9. 1; Luke 13. 28-30; 21. 31, 32; 22. 18; 10. 18; 4. 17-21; Matthew 11. 2-6; Luke 13. 18-21.

Read the first passages given above in which Jesus speaks of the Kingdom as that which is yet to be, and recall that this message was what stirred the hearts of his hearers.

Review in your mind our last lessons upon the Kingdom. If the Kingdom is of such a character, if it means the rule of God in men, the presence of a certain spirit, then may it not already be present?

Consider the next following passages given above, which suggest the Kingdom as present, especially those referring to the power of God ■■ even now overcoming evil and to the children of the Kingdom.

Note the important parables of the leaven and mustard seed. Jesus uses the picture of something living to show how the Kingdom will come. The nature of the Kingdom determines how it will come. If it is an outward rule, it can be set up in some great revolution by a deed of power. If it is an inner life, then it will grow from little to great like the seed or leaven.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FORMS AND INSTITUTIONS OF RELIGION

LIKE every other mode of life, religion has need of forms and institutions in which to express itself and maintain its being. What was Jesus' attitude toward those that were present in the religion of his own day: temple, synagogue, Sabbath-keeping, almsgiving, fasting, and the rest? And what of his relation to Christian forms and institutions? We have our sacred day, the first day of the week, our sacred forms such as baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the organized Christian Church itself. Did he plan for these and found them? And what place do they have in his conception of religion?

A RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT

The Inner Spirit Supreme with Jesus.—The religion of Jesus was a pure religion of the spirit. Love was the one word in which he summed up this spirit. This love was not a vague sentiment; it meant a whole-hearted trust and obedience toward God, and a spirit of good will toward all men that went out in loving service. But it still remains that it was an inner spirit that counted. The pure in heart are to see God, not those that tithe and wash. The test that he sets up for final judgment is the loving service of men, not the keeping of Sabbath rules or the holding of opinions (Matthew 25. 31-46).

His Indifference to Forms.—As regards the forms and institutions of his own day Jesus was relatively indifferent. The rabbis spent most of their time discussing the rules about washing and fasting and tithing and Sabbath-keeping. Jesus spent his time in kindling in men the hunger for God, in turning them from their fears and hatreds, in

calling forth the spirit of trust and love. Sometimes, indeed, he definitely violated these forms. That was when they got in the way of these higher matters, in which he was interested. If there was a man to be healed, he disregarded Sabbath rules. If there were sinners to be won, he paid no attention to the rules of ceremonial purity. He was quite ready to touch the poor leper and to have the woman with the issue of blood touch him, or to sit at table with men like Zacchæus and Levi.

The Danger from Forms.—Sometimes this indifference gave way to severest criticism. That was when Jesus saw the devotion to forms stand in the way of devotion to God and of the service of men. All great teachers of religion have seen this danger. The form is a good means but a bad end; and it is always leaving its place as means and asserting itself as end. Men come to keep the form for its own sake instead of as a helpful means. As a result, men lose the heart of religion, which is love and obedience toward God, righteousness and love in relation to men. In place of this come empty formalism, self-content and pride, and often hypocrisy. In such case, the forms of religion become the enemies of religion. The prophets had seen this long before and had denounced sacrifices and songs, Sabbath-keeping and new moon, and all the other forms of Israel's worship, while they pleaded for simple righteousness of heart and life (Isaiah 1. 10-17).

Criticism of the Forms of Jewish Piety.—In Matthew 6. 1-18 Jesus takes up the three chief forms in which the individual Jew expressed his religion: almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. Much of the Jewish practice was a good illustration of the wrong use of form. Alms were given not so much for the sake of the poor, as to be seen of men and to gain merit with God. Prayer had lost its meaning as simple worship and fellowship with God. There were many words, but little trust in God; there was much ostentation, but little humility in the sight of the Most High. So it was with fasting; there was little thought of the bowed soul, and much of what men might see. It was an

ostentatious performance. Here again Jesus stands for simplicity and sincerity, for the use of forms only so far as they express the life of the soul.

The Denunciation of Scribes and Pharisees.—All this formalism and traditionalism was summed up in the powerful party of the Pharisees and in their professional teachers, the scribes. Jesus had violated their rules, his teaching had contradicted their whole position. The time came at last when he had to come out definitely and denounce the whole system for which they stood. It was their idea that the chief business of religion was to observe the forms laid down in the law. In doing this they had built up an endless system of rules, "the traditions of the elders," and the keeping of these rules had become the great task of men. All this Jesus denounces because it stands in the way of real religion (Mark 7. 1-23). What is in the heart is the thing that counts.

Jesus' Attitude Toward Jewish Institutions

Synagogue and Temple.—And yet Jesus leaves a place for form and institution in religion. That may best be shown by his relation to synagogue and temple, the two great institutions of the Jewish religion in his time. Jesus was accustomed to attend the synagogue and kept up that custom when he began his ministry, using the opportunity to teach which the synagogue afforded, just as Paul did later on (Luke 4. 16-21). But the synagogue was not necessary for him any more than it was for Paul, and when they cast him forth he went on with his work outside of it. The temple was the pride and glory of every faithful Jew. We know what feelings it stirred in Jesus as a boy (Luke 2. 49). He did not lose that feeling as a man. He thought of it as a "house of prayer for all the nations," and was stirred with indignation at its desecration (Mark 11. 15-18). He used its courts to teach in. And yet the temple was not final or necessary; in a short time, he declared, not one stone of that wonderful structure was to remain upon another (Mark 13. 1, 2).

Two Important Sayings Concerning Forms.—Two significant passages give us the principles that underlie this practice of Jesus. One is connected with the dispute about the Sabbath day. The Jews had made its observance an end in itself; Jesus declares, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." In other words, the forms and institutions of religion are not ends in themselves, but are means and must always be held as such (Mark 2. 23-28). The other word was spoken in connection with a dispute about fasting. Jesus shows that religious forms must spring from religious life. Fasting may be all right in its place, but this is no time to fast. There is a new life here and it must shape its own forms. The new wine must have new wine-skins, the old ones must be laid aside (Mark 2. 18-22).

Two Principles.—These are revolutionary words. The priests and the Pharisees saw the logic of this teaching, and felt that it meant death for this teacher or the end of their rule. The Christian Church has not always remembered or understood these words, and we must bear them in mind as we study the relation of Jesus to forms and institutions in the Christian Church. Let us sum them up again: (1) Form and institution are not sacred in themselves; they are means and not ends. (2) The life must make the forms, and when these no longer serve the life they may need to be laid aside. The wine is never to be sacrificed to the wine-skins.

Christian Institutions and Forms

No Rules and Directions.—If this be the teaching of Jesus, then we need not be surprised to learn that the words of Jesus give us no full and definite instructions concerning our Christian institutions, such as church, sacraments, Lord's Day, and Scriptures. It was the life about which Jesus was concerned, and not the form. He gave the new life, and through these years that life has been shaping the forms in which to express itself. The only difficulty that has arisen has come because men looked

for a new law in the New Testament, and expected to find rules concerning these matters. One other point must be remembered, though we cannot speak with certainty about it. If Jesus expected a speedy personal return and with it the coming of a new age and a new world, then there was added reason why he should not concern himself about matters which would have to do with so very brief a period.

No Formal Institution of the Church.—The first and most important question is that of the church. Nowhere do the Gospels show that Jesus either organized a church or gave directions concerning its organization. There are only two passages in the Gospels that refer to the church, both in the same Gospel (Matthew 16. 18; 18. 17). "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." "And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church." By many scholars these references to the church are held to come from a later period; but in any case there is here no direction about the founding and organization of the church. Nor are such directions given elsewhere in the New Testament.

Yet It Is Christ's Church.—And yet the Christian Church is Christ's church, not as a legal organization but as the work of his spirit. It was he himself who began this by gathering his disciples together, and those who are led by the spirit of Christ will inevitably come together in some such association. That spirit means fellowship. It brings men together for common worship and service. The New Testament gives us no laws for the forming of a church, but the Christian life gives such a law, not outer but inner, the law of the spirit of Christ. Paul's converts gathered together in little companies wherever he went, and so it has been throughout Christian history. Such groups continue to be formed to-day.

Concerning the Christian Sunday.—The same situation appears in the case of our Christian Sunday, or Lord's Day. We have seen Jesus' attitude toward the Jewish Sabbath (Mark 2. 23 to 3. 6). The Sabbath was good so far as it served men. Here, as elsewhere, he simply leaves the old forms alone. As with sacrifices and circumcision

and other ceremonial laws, Jesus neither affirms nor abolishes the Jewish Sabbath, nor does he appoint another day. Religion for him was this inner spirit, a spirit of freedom and life that would find its own forms like the new wine-skins for the new wine. Paul led the early church to see this, and pointed out that the Christians were free from the law of the Sabbath as from washings and circumcision and the rest (Colossians 2. 16, 17). Nowhere is there a suggestion in the New Testament of the simple transference of the Jewish Sabbath from one day of the week to another. The new Christian day of rest and worship springs directly out of the spirit of Christ. The need of worship, the need of fellowship, the demand of rest for body and for the building up of the soul, all these required a stated day. The grateful love of his disciples made it a Lord's Day, and the joyous memory of his rising celebrated each week fixed the first day of the week.

Christian Baptism.—Even when we come to the sacraments, we do not find any definite institution of these as rites or directions as to their celebration. In both cases, however, we do have traditions which connect them with the example and deed of Jesus. In the case of baptism this is not so clear. John's Gospel reports that the disciples (though not Jesus) baptized the newly won followers (John 4. 1, 2). Of this there is no trace in the other Gospels, so that it must have been limited to the beginnings. Matthew 28. 19 is the only reference in the other Gospels. But even there we have no directions with regard to the manner of its administration. In any case the service of baptism is a fitting expression in symbol of the Christian spirit and Christian truth. On the one hand, it is the ceremony marking the entrance into the church, on the other it symbolizes with the water the gift of the Spirit of God coming to men through Christ and cleansing men from sin. Fittingly too we use it for little children, for they too belong to the Kingdom and to the church, and with them also God's Spirit is present in the Christian nurture of home and church.

The Origin of the Lord's Supper.—The Lord's Supper seems to have grown from a very simple act of Jesus. On that last evening as they sat together at table, Jesus handed his friends the broken bread and told them that in this way his body was to be broken; and then he gave them some wine to drink and told them that thus his blood was to be shed, that his death was to seal a new covenant and was to be for the saving of men. Did he expect them to repeat this rite? So Paul and Luke suggest this in the words which they alone give: "This do in remembrance of me." In the early church the observance seems to have occurred at first in connection with an ordinary meal, at which the congregation was gathered together. Later it became a special ceremony.

These two sacraments we must regard as we do other forms in Christianity. They are divine in so far as they express the spirit of Christ, and further the life of his disciples. When his followers make them a matter of strife, and even of warfare, as has been done in the past, or when they insist upon this form or that phrase as the vital element, then they are no longer of Christ. The church has erred much here.

Jesus and the Scriptures.—Jesus' attitude toward the Scriptures again shows his religion as a religion of the Spirit. His relation to them we have already considered.[1] He knew them well and used them constantly, and yet he did not follow the letter; he took the spiritual message and left the rest behind. If we turn to the New Testament, we find that Jesus made no provision for writings any more than he gave directions about the organization of the church. The Gospels and the rest of the New Testament are, indeed, his product, but not through any direction of his. It was his spirit, working in his disciples and in the early church, that brought them forth.

Directions for Study

Read Mark 7. 1-23; Luke 4. 16-21; 2. 49; Mark 11. 15-18; 13. 1, 2; 2. 18-28; Matthew 6. 1-18.

[1] Chapter I.

Review our past study and sum up your idea of what religion was according to Jesus.

Recall his relation to the forms and institutions of religion. What was his criticism of the forms of Jewish piety? Recall how indifferent he was to formal observances and how he had to criticize the scribes and Pharisees for their formalism.

Note that Jesus did have regard for Jewish forms and institutions. What, then, is the Christian position concerning the value and use of religious forms?

Consider in turn the different Christian institutions, and answer for yourself the question how they originated, and how they should be used.

CHAPTER XXII

JESUS' CONCEPTION OF HIS MISSION

WHAT was Jesus' mission upon earth? What did he regard as the great task of his life? There is danger of one-sided answers to this question. We may take three prominent examples to illustrate this. There is the ecclesiastical answer: Jesus came to establish a church, to found an institution to which he could turn over his work for men, or the salvation which he came to bring. Then there is the answer given by a certain type of theology: Jesus came to die, to satisfy the justice of God by suffering the penalty for the sins of men. The tendency of this view is to give very little meaning to the life and teaching of Jesus. Finally, there is the view that Jesus came as a great teacher of truth and a great example of life. No one of these views is adequate, each brings some of the truth.

WHY DID JESUS COME?

What Jesus Said of His Coming.—There are not a few passages in which Jesus speaks of the purpose of his coming. Very early in his ministry, after some notable healings at Capernaum which had stirred the people and brought the crowds in search of him the next morning, Jesus himself was found by his disciples out in the fields praying. To their urgent request to return he said: "Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth" (Mark 1. 38). Again we seem to have in Luke 4. 17-21 a confession of his life purpose. He reads from the prophets the words:

"He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:

He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

According to these two passages, Jesus came to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom, and to serve men. In two other notable passages Jesus declares that he is come to save sinners. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost," he declares to those who criticized him for going in to Zacchæus (Luke 19. 10). And when they criticized him at another time for a similar reason, he says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matthew 9. 13). Finally, there are the solemn words in which he looks forward to his death. The first was spoken not long after Peter's confession: "The Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10. 45). The second is from the time of the Last Supper, and speaks again of the purpose of his death: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mark 14. 24).

The Supreme Purpose: The Kingdom.—Back of these varied forms of statement there lies one great purpose. Jesus came to bring in the kingdom of God. That Kingdom, as we have seen, was the life of God ruling the lives of men. He came in order that men might have this life as sons of God, that men might be joined together in a new family of God, a fellowship of loving service, of righteous living and mutual good will. He came that there might be a new world, in which the life of God should make men rich, in which the will of God should be done in all the life of men. Nothing less than this was the purpose of Jesus. It was to save the world, not to save a few men. It was to make a new world, not to save a few souls out of the world. If he emphasized the saving of sinners and the calling of men to repentance, it was because he knew that impenitent sin was the one great obstacle that stood in the way of that new life from God and that new world of God's rule.

What Did He Have to Do?

He Came to Preach.—What did Jesus need to do in order to the establishment of this Kingdom? His first task was to preach. "To this end came I forth," he declared. So the evangelists describe his work at its beginning (Mark 1. 14, 15). Such it remained to the very end. It was as a teacher that his disciples first regarded him, and he never lost that place. It was a title that he chose also for himself (Mark 14. 14). He had a message to bring, a revelation to make: "Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Matthew 11. 27). It was through the truth that Jesus expected to bring life to men. He did not give men rites and forms, and tell them that they were to gain life in this way. He did not give them rules to follow. He wanted men to see, to know. "The truth shall make you free." He must make men see God, see his nearness, his love, his power, his gracious purpose to save them and to establish his rule. Then he could call men to repent, then he could summon them to cast aside their enslaving fears and worries and their selfishness and sin, and receive this life of God. Such teaching as his was no mere work of intellect, no cold setting forth of ideas. It meant loving and living, and in the end suffering and death. The cross itself was the last great parable of that Teacher who spoke so often to men in pictures. In this sense, the whole work of Jesus may be considered as a work of teaching.

He Came to Live a Life.—Jesus' second task was the living of a life. That, indeed, was a part of his teaching. It was his life that gave power and meaning and beauty to his words. He could say, "I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you" (John 13. 15). He bade men learn not only through his words but by his spirit and life: "Come unto me, . . . learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11. 28, 29). Here was a teaching that every man could read and that no man could forget. He did not in so many words

say, "I am come to lead such a life before you," but looking back we can see here the good purpose of God. More than any precept that he gave was the illuminating guidance of his own life, showing men what they should be. Better than his best parable about God was his own gracious and holy spirit as a revelation of God's heart. So the early church, with Paul, saw "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4. 6).

He Came to Serve Men.—Jesus came to be a servant. This was not an incident in his life, it was his vocation. "The Son of man came to minister," he said (Mark 10. 45). "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth" (Luke 22. 27). He had recognized this to be his calling at the beginning. The temptation story is eloquent proof how he faced the alternative, whether he should take the expected way of power and rule, or that of humble and loving ministry to men. It was by service that he showed men the spirit of God as a spirit of mercy and good will. It was by service that he sought to create a new people of God, ministering to their needs, winning them from their sins. And by his service he showed men what the life was to be in the new Kingdom, whose rule was to be not self-seeking and mastery, but good will and helpfulness (Mark 10. 42-45). We must not think of this service as the casual giving of bread here or of healing there, as a lesser form of work before his great work of giving his life. His service of deed, like the service of teaching, is one with his final and greatest deed, and the meaning of it all is the giving of life. All true service of men is the giving of life. The highest service is that in which we give most of ourselves and most to others.

Jesus Came to Give His Life

A Conviction That Came Gradually.—Jesus came not only to live for men but to give his life in death. We do not know at just what point in his life Jesus realized that his death was to be a part of his obedience to God

and his service of men. The study of his life shows how he depended upon his Father for guidance. His way was not one clearly seen in all its course from the beginning. Its great moments are marked by struggle. That is especially seen at three points: the temptation, the time of the confession and transfiguration, and the prayer in the garden. All three of these struggles bear upon this question of his death. The first more remotely; but when he decided in the wilderness to take the way of humble service, to trust his Father instead of seeking to save himself, there was probably even then in his mind the question as to what danger the future might bring.

How He Learned.—His ministry had not advanced far before the question became more definite. On the one hand appeared the dangers from his foes, on the other it became ever more clear that the way of duty led to Jerusalem with all its perils. "The days will come," said Jesus at this time, "when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast" (Matthew 9. 15). Driven from Galilee, wandering among the Gentiles, he faces the question in a night of struggle that ends in the transfiguration. From that time in clear and definite words he tells his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, and that he must suffer death there at the hands of his foes (Mark 8. 31; 9. 31; 10. 33, 34). The end of John the Baptist and the fate of the prophets help to point the way (Matthew 17. 12; 23. 29-31). "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Luke 13. 31-35). He suggests it even to his foes in the parable of the wicked husbandmen by his reference to the son (Mark 12. 6-8). He sets his face steadfastly toward this dark future, but the burden weighs heavily upon his soul. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12. 50).

How Jesus Thought of His Death.—How, then, did Jesus conceive of his death as being a part of his work? Jesus does not, indeed, speak anywhere with fullness upon this matter. His words contain only intimations and suggestion, which it is not right for us to press too far. And

yet certain things are quite clear. (1) Jesus did not think of his death as a tragedy or an accident, but as the will of the Father for his life. (2) He himself freely and willingly chooses that death. The choice is not made without a terrible struggle, to which other passages witness besides the memorable one that tells of Gethsemane. But it is freely made. He need not have gone to Jerusalem. Once there, he might easily have escaped. His enemies, who feared the people, would probably have been only too glad if he had quietly given up his public ministry and gone away. We may say that he was murdered, but we must also say that he lay down his life; and the latter is the deeper truth. (3) He saw that his death had a meaning. It was not only a part of his obedience to God, but it was a part of his service to men, a part of his work in bringing in the Kingdom.

Some Sayings Concerning His Death.—Two words of Jesus concerning his death demand a closer study. In Mark 10. 45 he speaks of giving his life as a ransom for many. In Mark's account of the Lord's Supper, the briefest and perhaps the most faithful, he says: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mark 14. 24). Matthew adds to this account the words, "unto remission of sins." In so doing he only gives what was in the thought of the church from the beginning. According to these words, what meaning did Jesus give to his death? (1) His death means a service for men. His blood is poured out for many, his life is given for many. But just how does this serve men? We must say (2), by his death God establishes a covenant with men. Luke speaks of it as the new covenant. That is clearly implied, for the Jew would at once contrast it with the old covenant. All the way through here Jesus is using the language of picture and allusion. As the old covenant established a people of God, so will the new covenant. His death is to make manifest God's love and purpose, and thus a new people is to be gathered. (3) His death in some way is to mean the forgiveness of men, the saving of men from their sins.

Jesus' Death Has Saved Men.—It is in this last matter that men have disputed most as to the meaning of Jesus' words. We who have noted the Master's picture method of teaching should not be led astray here. He is using the picture of the captive or slave for whom a price must be paid. Men are in bondage, they are not free. By the word of truth and by his deeds of love he has been seeking to deliver men from this slavery of ignorance and fear and sin, and now it is to cost his life. His death is to save men whom this life could not win. How true his word has proven! It is his death that has won men. It is the cross that has drawn men. That cross has somehow gathered unto itself all the meaning of his teaching, all the glory of his life, all the purpose of his coming. Here men have seen what sin means, from which such a deed of darkness might come. Here men have seen God's holiness. Here has appeared the love of God, God's infinite affection set forth so simply that all might understand, so movingly that multitudes have felt and made answer. Leaving aside all theory for the time, the fact remains clear that the cross of Christ has ransomed the many, and has brought to many the remission of their sins.

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Mark 1. 38; Luke 4. 17-21; 19. 10; Matthew 9. 13; Mark 10. 42-45; 8. 29-31; 9. 31; 10. 33, 34; 14. 22-25.

Read through the Scripture references and recall any others that you can in which Jesus speaks of the purpose of his coming. State for yourself and in your own language what that purpose was.

He who plans to do a certain work must stand ready to do that which leads to his end. What was it that Jesus had to do as means to his great end, and how did these means serve that end?

Consider in turn these different tasks. He came to give men the truth, to lead a life in their midst, to serve them. Under each of these points, consider what Jesus said as bearing upon this work, and how this particular work helped him to accomplish his end.

In your own faith and in your own life, what has the death of Jesus meant?

CHAPTER XXIII

WHAT JESUS THOUGHT OF HIMSELF

PAUL summed up the message of the early church in the words, "Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Through all the ages the Christian Church has made this its message; not simply Jesus' teaching or his life, but first of all Jesus himself. The question of the person of Christ has been of deepest interest. This is not the place to study the church's doctrine of Christ. We have, however, an even more important question: What did Jesus think of himself?

WHAT JESUS SAYS OF HIMSELF

The Silence of His Earlier Ministry.—It is generally agreed that the first three Gospels give the most faithful account of Jesus' teaching, and the study of these Gospels has shown us that Jesus' great concern was to point men to God. He says little of himself, especially in the earlier days; it is of the Father that he speaks, and of the coming rule of God. It is the life with God that he sets forth, that abundant life which comes only when God rules in men.

Yet even in these earlier days we find expressions concerning himself that would be most astonishing from any other man. There is the note of authority with which he declares, "But I say unto you," an authority which he sets even against the sacred writings of his people (Matthew 5. 22, 28, 34, 39). Quietly he asserts that he is greater than the temple, the nation's greatest glory next to the law, that he is greater than Jonah or Solomon (Matthew 12. 6, 41, 42). He declares that John the Baptist was the greatest of the prophets, but with himself there

has come a new age so much more wonderful that the least in the kingdom of God is greater than John. He summons his followers to rejoice because they live in such an age: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not" (Luke 10. 23, 24).

Sonship Before Messiahship.—What was the underlying fact in Jesus' thought of himself? Was it that he was the Messiah? That, of course, was the thought that dominated the early church: Jesus is the Messiah, the long-expected Deliverer. And so it happened very soon that the Greek word for "Messiah," the "Anointed One," came to be used as a proper name, and men called him Christ. Very commonly too, as men have studied the person of Jesus, they have begun with the thought of Messiah and then moved on and up to the thought that he was Son of God. And yet, reading the Gospel pages carefully, we must conclude that the first and deepest fact in Jesus' thought of himself was not Messiahship, but Sonship. He claims Messiahship, but the Sonship comes first (Matthew 16. 13-17).

The Experience of Sonship in Jesus' Life.—This spirit of Sonship is evident in all the life of Jesus. The boy's first temple visit (Luke 2. 41-52) shows the devotion to his Father and the sense of his Father's presence which marked all his life. On the other hand, he knew his Father's love and purpose for him. That fact stands out in his great experience of baptism, when the voice comes to him saying, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." All through his life flows this great current: on the one hand his utter devotion to God and perfect fellowship with him, on the other the knowledge that his life and his work are all of God and in God's hand. That assurance stands the test of the last terrible days. It cries out "Abba, Father" in the struggle of the garden, and breathes forth upon the cross its last words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

A Unique Sonship

Jesus Is the Son.—But the Sonship of Jesus means something more. We think of him not simply as *a* son of God, but as *the* Son of God. Does this rightly represent Jesus' own thought? Certain facts are significant here. Jesus seeks to lead men into the same life of sonship that he lives, and yet it is always apparent that he is the source and they take from him. He teaches them to pray, but it is nowhere said that he prays with them. He bids them repent, but himself shows no need of repentance. And so we are not surprised when he speaks of himself as "the Son"; he knows that his Sonship is unique.

The Great Invitation.—One passage speaks to us here with special power and beauty. It was spoken at a time of disappointment, when to human eyes his work seemed a failure. These great words show how little Jesus was dependent upon outward approval, how wholly the sources of strength and insight were within. Coming from Jesus' deepest soul, they form a lyric which may well be printed in verse form (Matthew 11. 25-30).

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
That thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding,
And didst reveal them unto babes:
Yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight.

"All things have been delivered unto me of my Father:
And no one knoweth the Son, save the Father;
Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son,
And he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden,
And I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me;
For I am meek and lowly in heart:
And ye shall find rest unto your souls.
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The Son Has Life for Men.—Here is no mere learner saying, "Come, let us seek the Lord together." This is no mere teacher saying, "Here is my message, take it and go." Two facts stand out clearly in this passage: First, Jesus knows that he stands in a special relation to the Father. Second, because of this relation to the Father, he has a special mission to men. In him is the truth of God, in him is the life. And so he calls men to himself: "Come unto me," "learn of me," "take my yoke," "find my rest."

Jesus' Use of "Son of Man."—"Son of man" was the phrase that Jesus used in speaking of himself. No less than eighty times does the phrase occur in the Gospels. What did it mean for Jesus? (1) It does not refer especially to the humanity of Jesus, either as meaning that he was one among men, or that he was the ideal man. (2) It probably means the Messiah. We know that some Jewish writers had already used the phrase in that sense, and had interpreted the passage Daniel 7. 13 as meaning this. (3) Why, then, did Jesus use a phrase whose meaning would not be clear and definite to those who heard it? The answer is most suggestive. First of all, he used it because this title, so humble and so human, of all the Messianic names had the least suggestion of the claim of earthly royalty and power. It fitted in with the whole spirit and life of Jesus, with his ministry of service. In the second place, just because men would not necessarily understand it as Messianic, it made it possible for Jesus to fill it with his own meaning. Messiah to-day is a word that has many meanings, Christian, Jewish, even pagan; but Son of man has only one meaning for us, a meaning full of the glory of love and sacrifice. It is an exalted name, but it does not rest on thoughts of earthly glory or external power.

Jesus as Saviour

Sonship for Jesus Meant Being Saviour and Servant.—The Sonship of Jesus is always to be connected with his Saviourhood. Wherever in the first three Gospels there

is a reference to Jesus' Sonship it is always joined with the thought of his serving and saving men. He hears the voice at his baptism, but the voice that speaks of the "beloved Son" is one that calls him to a task. In the temptation story the two thoughts are joined again. "If thou art the Son of God," says the tempter, "then the kingdoms of the world should be thine." "If I am the Son of God," says Jesus, "then I must obey and serve and, if needs be, suffer." Sonship meant for him the task rather than the special privilege. When the disciples confess him as Messiah he begins at once to teach them the law of service and to speak of his death for men (Mark 10. 45). Paul sets forth one side of this truth in the wonderful passage of Philippians 2. 5-11.

The Son as the Saviour of Men.—The Sonship of Jesus leads us thus to Saviourhood; because he is the Son of God he becomes to us the Saviour, and because we know him as Saviour we see that he is Son. He found men burdened and enslaved. There was the load of fear and anxiety, the slavery of greed and selfishness and hatred and lust. And religion itself, which should have brought peace and strength, in many cases had but added to the load. Jesus knew that he had within him the life which men needed. With all his burdens, there was peace in his heart; with all the danger, there was joy and trust in God. Because he is Son of God, therefore, and possesses this, he becomes Saviour of men. Come unto me, he says; leave the yoke of the law and take my yoke, for it will bring you rest.

Jesus as Lord and Master

Jesus Is Lord Because He Saves.—In taking up these aspects of the person of Jesus we have been following a definite order, and there is reason for this. First comes the Sonship of Jesus, his life of perfect oneness with the Father. Next comes his Saviourhood; because this life is in him he can deliver men and give them the new life. And now there comes his Lordship: Jesus is Lord of men because he is Saviour of men. That is true in Christian

experience. Men follow him and obey him because of what he has done for them. Because he has given them life, they cry out: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." He is Master because he has the truth. He is our Lord because he has the power to save. What is seen in Christian experience is reflected in the Gospels. Jesus does not begin his ministry by the assertion of authority and the claim of Lordship. He begins by teaching and healing and saving. Then, because he has the truth of God, he asserts his authority to speak; and because he brings life he asserts his right to command.

His Authority As One Who Has the Truth.—Note how Jesus asserts his authority as teacher (Matthew 23. 8-10). He quotes no scribe or rabbi, like other Jewish teachers. He needs no authority, not even that of the Old Testament. He appeals, it is true, to the latter, but he does not depend upon it; he speaks from within. He does not even say with the prophet, "Thus saith the Lord," but simply, "I say unto you"; "No one knoweth the Father, save the Son." When the test comes he is not simply independent but he can oppose all else. He opposes the authority of the scribes, the unquestioned leaders. He denounces the revered traditions, more binding upon the Jew than the law itself. He holds himself greater than temple or prophet. He even puts aside the law itself. And all this is done quietly, simply, as by one who is entirely sure of himself.

His Authority in Healing and Forgiving.—There is utter dependence upon the Father, but there is also absolute independence of all else. He knows that the power of God and the love of God are in him, just as he knows the truth of God within him. "Arise," he says to the sufferer. "Thy sins are forgiven," he says to the sinner.

His Authority in Commanding Men.—Jesus shows his authority by the way in which he commands men. He does not command their bodies; he does not levy taxes, nor put a sword into their hand. But he claims a sovereign authority in the sphere of conscience and will, and

he rules as Lord of men's souls. Nor is it little that he asks. He is satisfied with no tenth of a man's income or seventh of his days. Words and forms and outward gifts are not enough; he demands the inmost spirit, the inner thought. He bids men leave home and kindred; he declares that his followers must hold their lives forfeit to him as truly as the man condemned who goes out carrying his cross. He puts all his astonishing claim in two words and says, "Follow me."

His Right to Judge.—And, finally, in one remarkable passage he tells how all the nations are to be gathered before him and how he is to judge them and separate them (Matthew 25. 31-34). Such a claim has seemed to some out of keeping with the life of one who went about humbly to teach and to forgive. But it is this very work of teaching and saving which in the end makes Jesus the judge of men. The fourth Gospel puts it in brief but pregnant words: "This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light" (John 3. 19). Every truth becomes a test; every opportunity is at the same time a judgment. This fact lies back of the great passage, Matthew 12. 22-45, the heart of which is found in the words, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." Because Jesus is the light and the life of men, he becomes the judge of men. It is God's love and God's will that stand before men when Jesus speaks to them. They judge themselves by what they do with him. In the great judgment scene of Matthew 25, Jesus simply says in effect to those on the left: You refused my gospel of love and good will as the rule of your life; by that you have judged yourselves. It is not the law that judges those who refuse mercy; it is the gospel of mercy itself that condemns.

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Matthew 12. 6, 41, 42; Luke 10. 23, 24; Matthew 16. 13-17; 11. 25-30; Mark 10. 45; Matthew 23. 8-10; 25. 31-34.

Consider first how utterly unassuming Jesus was, how little

he demanded for himself. Then note some of the astonishing claims that he made.

Consider the fact of Jesus [redacted] Son. Note how simple the thought is, and how Jesus began with this as boy at Nazareth (read the story of the temple visit). Then note how high this thought leads.

State for yourself in what way Jesus was Saviour to the men of his day. What did he give them? What did he do for them? What does he do for us?

In what ways did he show himself to be Master?

In how far is the Lordship of Jesus a fact in the world to-day? Consider his Lordship over men in their ideals, their faith, and their life. How far are our ideas of God and our ideals of right and wrong determined by Jesus?

CHAPTER XXIV

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS AS SEEN IN RELATION TO MEN AND TO HIS WORK

"CHRISTIANITY is not so much the advent of a better doctrine, as of a perfect character," wrote Horace Bushnell. It is this character which we are now to consider. Such a subject might properly conclude a study of the life of Jesus. It has its place, however, as a part of the study of Jesus' teachings also. As with no other teacher, Jesus' word and life were one. The perfect character is a part of the better doctrine. Indeed, that character gives us his teaching in a way that his words cannot do. It is in the life that he lived that we see all that the heart of God is, all that the children of men should be. The study of his character reveals both his religion and his ethics.

THE FRIENDLINESS OF JESUS

The Friend of All Men.—The words that inspired a certain well-known poem might have been written of Jesus: "He was a friend to man, and he lived in a house by the side of the road." There is a type of holiness which separates a man from his fellows for fear of defilement, and sends him into wilderness or monastery to cultivate his inner life. The holiness of Jesus was human, loving, friendly. He was the most accessible of men; instinctively men felt that they could come to him. He was a holy man and a renowned teacher, but little children went straight to his arms, outcast publicans and sinners thronged about him, and even the women of the street did not hesitate to draw near (Mark 2. 14-17).

As Companion and Intimate.—He had his more intimate friends, the circle of the twelve, especially Peter, James, and John. Here were men with whom he companied day

and night for weeks and months. There were homes where he was a familiar guest. It is a convincing light on the greatness of Jesus that these men who knew him best rated him highest. There is truth at times in the proverb that "familiarity breeds contempt." Close contact with even the greatest of men reveals some frailty, some foible, some point of weakness or defect. But the friendliness of Jesus served only to reveal more clearly his greatness, and it was those that knew him best who called him Lord and Master.

The Spirit of Appreciation.—Closely allied to this was Jesus' spirit of appreciation. He who was so quick to see God in the care of the birds or the color of the lilies, was quick to see God's Spirit when it showed itself in men. He notices those who do the little helpful things, giving the drink of water or the bit of bread. He sees what is rich and fine behind a simple deed. The widow's mite becomes a glorious gift. How full of feeling are those words in which he speaks of the woman who unconsciously anointed him for the burial! We know the faults of the twelve, but how finely he pays tribute to their friendship and loyalty: "Ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations." And this appreciation extends even to those who were despised and hated and looked upon as outcast. The Roman oppressor, the traitor taxgatherer, the woman of the street, the Samaritan—for all these the average Jew had only contempt or hate. But it is a publican whose prayer Jesus holds up as an example for men. It is a Roman officer whose faith he praises. He has appreciation for the earnestness and penitence of the publicans and harlots who are pressing into the kingdom of God. And it is a Samaritan leper whose gratitude warms the heart of Jesus.

Love and Compassion

The Sympathy of Jesus.—The compassion of Jesus stands out on every page of the Gospels. Oriental lands have commonly shown a certain indifference to suffering.

It is so common, and it seems so hopeless. In Jesus' day there was no organized care for the poor, the sick, the blind, the maimed, or the insane. Their number was legion, and men were hardened to sights that would not be tolerated for a moment in the streets of any city of our land. The edge of Jesus' pity was never dulled, though these unfortunates thronged his way wherever he went. Nor was there human need of any kind that came before him in vain. He had pity for the hungry and fed them. He was moved by the ills of the body, sightless eyes, stricken limbs, loathsome leprosy. Most of all did the inner needs of men stir his soul. He saw them "distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd"; foolish, sinful, burdened, unhappy, no one was showing them the truth and the way (Matthew 9. 36). Nor could any evil of men limit that all-encompassing pity. He laments over the city that is to reject and slay him. Fainting under his cross, he bids the women weep not for him, but for Jerusalem. And his last words breathe forgiveness for those who slew him, and who knew not what they did.

The Love of Jesus.—The word "love" sums up this side of Jesus' nature. It is more than pity, and far more than mere sentiment. "Love" was a different word before Jesus gave it its Christian meaning. He redeemed it from all trace of the earthly and sensual. He broke down all barriers and made it as broad as human kind. Christian love is an all-embracing and unconquerable good will that seeks the highest welfare of its object. It is strong as well as tender; it is sentiment, but it moves on to action. It can hate as well as love, for such love is through and through ethical, and it must fight all that harms and destroys. And yet its good will has room for every vilest sinner and every bitterest foe. And Jesus has shown us what this spirit of love is; love does not describe Jesus, Jesus gives the meaning to love.

The Loneliness of Jesus

The Lonely Life.—Jesus was friendly to men and craved

their love and sympathy in return, and yet in the deepest sense he lived a lonely life. He has his friends among John's disciples at the time of his baptism, but he fights his great temptation battle in the wilderness alone. He gathers a little company of followers and shares with them all the common experiences of life. He seeks to give them all his love and his vision of God, and yet there are depths that they cannot reach and heights to which they cannot ascend. As he begins that last fateful journey to Jerusalem we read that Jesus went on before them alone, and "they that followed were afraid." He takes them with him to the garden when he prays, but in that final fearful struggle he was indeed alone though only "parted from them about a stone's cast." When at last he hung upon the cross, they were scattered and he and his Father were alone. We think of Jesus' perfect union with the Father when we read the words, "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father," but they set forth at the same time the loneliness of his life.

The Independence of Jesus.—With this loneliness went his independence. He craved sympathy and rejoiced in the friendship of men, but it was the lot of his life to stand out in turn against all to whom he was naturally bound. He had to oppose, for a time at least, his mother and brothers. He had to stand against the revered leaders of his people, learned scribes and "holy" Pharisees. He had to oppose all the expectations of his people which they had joined to the name of Messiah and the thought of the Kingdom. He had to oppose the civil and religious authorities of his people, the priests in charge of the temple, and the great Sanhedrin. Even from his friends he had to turn, rebuking them for their wrong aims and saying to their leader the sharp word, "Get thee behind me, Satan." One is reminded of the saying of a modern thinker, "He who would be a leader must not be afraid to walk alone."

The Severity of Jesus

The Severity of Jesus.—It seems at first wholly in-

congruous to speak of the severity of Jesus. Severity is often associated with narrowness, and we have seen how broad and tolerant Jesus' spirit was. It is usually opposed to pity and affection, and these marked the Son of man. Perhaps a better word than severity might be chosen, but there is at times a certain sternness, a certain inflexibility which is very different from the popular thought of the gentle, meek, and mild Jesus. He sets his demands before men uncompromisingly. Sell what you have, take up your cross, hate your life, follow me: so he speaks to men. He has no room for half-heartedness. He has pity for the sinful, but when they turn it must be with their whole heart. This broadest of teachers has about him a certain narrowness. He insists upon the pure heart, the single aim. Strive to enter in, he calls out to men. His rebuke of evil is not only stern but full of deep passion, whether it be the Pharisees to whom he speaks or his friend Peter.

His Severity Rooted in Loyalty and Love.—Shallow men take offense at this. Their idea of liberality is indifference. Their conception of love and kindness is sentimentality. They lack moral depth and fiber. With Jesus there was first of all the absolute devotion to truth and right. An utter loyalty to the will of God marked his own life. Nothing could move him from this, neither toil nor peril nor suffering nor death. To be pure in the inmost thought, to be true in the least word, to be obedient with the whole heart, that was his life, and that he demanded of others. Men have sometimes talked as though righteousness like this might come into conflict with love, as though it might demand harshness where love would be lenient. But that is a wrong conception of righteousness as it is of love. The love of Jesus would have been a poor and impotent thing if this righteousness had not been at its heart. It is just because Jesus saw so unerringly and demanded so uncompromisingly, because he so hated iniquity and loved righteousness, that his love has been the saving power that it is. Because he loved men he could not ask less.

Loyalty and Devotion

The Value of Loyalty.—What Jesus demanded of others, that he was the first to yield himself, an absolute and unwavering loyalty to his work, a single devotion that counted no cost and shrank at no sacrifice. Men have not rated highly enough the virtue of loyalty. It lifts men out of petty lives and makes them great by joining them to some high cause. Weak men become strong through it, and timid men are made into heroes. If this is valued in times of war, how much more it means in time of peace when no great wave of public feeling carries men on and only simple steadfastness in duty sustains them. Again and again Jesus praises such simple loyalty: "he that is faithful," "he that endureth," "ye have continued with me." It is such men who win the "Well done" at the last.

Jesus' Devotion to His Work.—Such was the spirit of Jesus' life: a simple but absolute devotion to his work. It calls him from Nazareth. It occupies him through the days of meditation and struggle in the wilderness. It fills his thought in long nights of prayer: What is my Father's will, and how am I to do his work? It carries the secret of his unshaken confidence even with approaching death; he throws himself upon God because he is doing God's work. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." And how that cry upon the cross reveals all the toil and terrible conflict of the past from which his spirit now turns to his Father! "It is finished." He was sent into the world for a great work; now it is accomplished. The unselfishness of that devotion friend and enemy alike recognized. He received no higher tribute than that which came from his enemies in heartless taunt as he hung upon the cross: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Only, we write it a little differently: That he might save others, he would not save himself.

His Enthusiasm and Passion.—Such devotion was no cold obedience to duty. Righteousness was the passion of

his life, and his soul was full of a holy and sustaining enthusiasm for his work. The fourth Gospel gives the picture of Jesus at the well, forgetful of weariness and hunger, his soul stirred with the vision of whitened fields, saying to his returning disciples: "I have meat to eat that ye know not" (John 4. 31-35). With what passion of indignation does he smite hypocrisy and wrong and oppression! With what joy does he look upon the penitence of publican and harlot, and the eager earnestness of those whom he sees taking the Kingdom by storm! It was his holy indignation that swept the temple, not the feeble scourge that he bore in his hands. And with what a deep feeling of love and devotion and confidence has he filled his disciples ever since! Jesus changed the morality of bald duty into a mighty passion; he taught men how to hate the evil and love the good, and thus gave men not only ideals but power. He changed religion into a like passion, which joined a glowing devotion to God with a joyous confidence in the future. But that conquering spirit which has marked his disciples was first seen in its purity and power in himself.

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Mark 2. 14-17; 14. 6-9; Matthew 9. 36; 23. 13-36; Mark 8. 33; John 4. 32-34. Only a few Scripture references are given. The whole Gospels must be the material for this lesson.

Under the friendliness of Jesus, think of his humanness, his kindliness, his warm-heartedness. Recall all the instances you can in which Jesus showed himself thus friendly.

The love and compassion of Jesus take us a little farther. Call to mind the different classes of folks to whom Jesus showed this pity. Did he show it toward his enemies?

Was it hard for one of Jesus' friendly and sympathetic nature to be lonely? State the causes of this loneliness.

Where did Jesus most clearly show his loyalty to his work and to God?

How far is loyalty the test of character?

CHAPTER XXV

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS AS SEEN IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE AND HIS RELATION TO GOD

We have seen the character of Jesus in his relation with men, but the springs of his life lay beneath this. These we consider when we study the inner spirit of his life and his relation with God. Men saw his love and righteousness in word and deed, but they felt even more the power of the life that lay behind this. "In him was life," wrote one of his disciples. What was that life?

The Life of Jesus with God

The inner life of Jesus was a life with God. One man's passion is beauty. Another's dream is of power. A third sets all his strength to the gaining of wealth, and measures all things in relation to this end. The passion of Jesus was God. All the thought of his life was filled with God. The fallen sparrow, the tinted lily, the glowing sunset, the swift tempest, the life of men about him all spoke to him of God.

A Life of Humility.—The life of Jesus with his Father was first of all a life of humility. We have seen the independence of Jesus, how he asserted his authority against friend and foe, against priest and scribe, and even over against the sacred law. The source of that independence was in his utter dependence upon God. He had no desire for himself. He saw his life only in relation to God's will, and lived in utter dependence upon God's power. That dependence is no irksome restraint, but a matter of deepest rejoicing. His Father is Lord of heaven and earth and of his own life, and for this he thanks God (Matthew 11. 25). All the praying of Jesus shows this spirit; it is

the atmosphere that encompasses the Lord's prayer, and it fills his soul in the conflict in the Garden.

A Life of Trust.—Closely akin to this humility is his confidence in God. The spirit of utter trust breathes through all his life. His confidence did not come from ignorance or blindness. He knew from the first the evils that surrounded him, and what awaited him in those last days, but he never hesitated (Luke 9. 51). He knew the peril from Herod, "that fox," but he knew also that "to-day and to-morrow and the third day" were in God's hand. Upon his Father's goodness he could fling his life, for this Father was Lord of heaven and earth. All who saw him noted that spirit of confidence. Even his enemies said, "He trusted in God," albeit they mocked in saying it. The early church, with its joyous faith, is witness to his power to communicate this spirit to others. His praying shows us that this confidence was not held without fierce struggle. He wrought his work amid the greatest perils. He saw his nation turn from him, his disciples desert him, one of his companions betray him, and the most cruel and shameful of deaths coming upon him. But in the midst of all danger and the apparent collapse of his work his quiet confidence and peace never left him. He breathed his last with words of trust upon his lips: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

A Life of Obedience.—In the teaching of Jesus, obedience and trust go hand in hand. So it is in his life. There is more than one kind of obedience. There is the obedience of the servant who thinks only of his wage. There is the obedience that bows in submission because it cannot help. But the obedience of trust and devotion is of a different kind. Such was the obedience of Jesus. When he thought of the will of God he saw it as the greatest good that could come to man; to do that will was man's highest calling. Here too there was struggle, as he faced shame and pain and seeming defeat; and yet he could say of all his life, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." The will of God was not only the supreme purpose of his life, but the joy and strength that sustained him.

The Spirit of Jesus

His Purity.—We have considered the character of Jesus in his relation to his fellows and to God. We need now to look at that character as a whole. "And first of all we note its purity. The taint of sin is upon all other lives. We turn to them, the greatest and the best, who

> '. . . climbed the steep ascent to heaven
> Through peril, toil, and pain.'

They are the victors who overcame, whose names we cheer. But the marks of the conflict are upon them all; the stain of dust is on their garments, and they have all known defeat. His life too had its struggles, but he alone bears no scars and shows no stains. Our saints of earth are the last to speak of freedom from sin; the higher men rise spiritually the more sensitive the conscience, the deeper the feeling of guilt. No men have ever uttered a deeper note of contrition than Paul or Augustine or Luther. No man had so clear a vision of sin as Jesus. No man ever made it so clear as the dark and damnable thing that it is. And yet he never once betrays even a passing sense of penitence or suggests a single time a consciousness of the need of forgiveness."

His Positive and Passionate Righteousness.—The word "purity," like the word "sinlessness," has a suggestion of the negative about it. That is far from its meaning, however, in the case of Jesus. The thought of the church and the pictures of the artists have sometimes been at fault here. They have laid the whole stress on the meekness and mildness and patience of Jesus; he stands before us as a patient sufferer removed from all the interests as from all the evil of life. But the impression that we get from a fair study of the Gospels is very different. It is the positiveness of his character that we feel. His morality is no negative, colorless thing. His life, like his teaching, has a note of power and authority. His righteousness is not an absence of sin, but a flaming passion for the good.

The traditional saint is one who turned from evil; Jesus faced it and fought it. Sometimes men have even stumbled at the burning words which Jesus flung at the Pharisees, or at the thought of a scourge of cords in the hands of the man of love. All this is but the mark of the positiveness and power of his righteousness. Our reaction against evil as against good is wont to be weak and intermittent; his was always quick and strong. Wherever he saw good in men, in their earnestness or good will or penitence, there he responded at once with sympathy and appreciation and help. Where he saw evil, the reaction was just as sure. And he flamed out against evil just because his love was so strong. There was nothing passive or negative in him. And because he set forth righteousness so positively, men had to take sides for or against him, as they have done ever since.

A Wholesome Holiness.—With this positiveness of Jesus' spirit there goes his wholesomeness. One might call it the wholeness, or true holiness, of his life. There is a certain piety which fears the world and thrives only by running from it. To such saints the joys of common life are a matter of suspicion. A robust health does not point to the Kingdom, and the way to God seems to lead away from the common and the human. This spirit of world-fear and world-flight may be found in the Protestant Church as well as elsewhere. The spirit of Jesus points the other way. There is a sanity and poise about him. There is a simple humanness in his ways. There is even a joyousness in his spirit. All life interested him, childhood at play, motherhood and home, men at their business, nature in its beauty. Especially was he a good companion—sociable, we sometimes say. There were homes that looked for his coming, close friends who shared his days and nights, and festal occasions where he was the chief guest. Because he was pure, he could welcome all good things without peril, and yet he never lost the highest among these lesser goods.

The Balance and Completeness of His Character.—And to this we must add the completeness of the character of

Jesus. It is a simple thing to say, it is a wonderful thing to realize, that Jesus represents not one type of achievement, however great, but the highest in all human life and relations. Among men, even the greatest, we find one quality or another preeminent. Francis of Assisi is the type of boundless love and gracious service. Brave Martin Luther was born for days which called for hard blows and a doughty spirit. The spirit of both is found in Jesus, and all else besides. The most opposite virtues are perfectly expressed in him. His is the spirit of perfect humility wholly dependent upon God; his is the courage and independence that stands unshaken before the world. There is a sympathy and tenderness about him like that of a woman; by its side there is a virility, a masterfulness, that no man has surpassed. To-day he gathers into his arms the little children, on the morrow his flaming passion sweeps the temple of its defilers. What love and gentleness are in him, and yet how stern, how unyielding he can be with others and with himself! He is a comrade of joy in the fellowship with men, but he knows also the night of prayer and the perfect fellowship with God. He was the most friendly of men, the supreme Friend, and yet no man was ever more lonely than he.

The Example and Inspiration of All.—"What wonder that he speaks to every land and age, to every type of this race of ours. All have found their inspiration and ideal in him. In him is the spirit of all kind and tender mothers, of all loyal friends, and lovers of men. He has been the inspiration of purity and truth, of all high and noble manhood that has quickened our lesser lives. His is the spirit of faith that has made men quiet and strong when all the world opposed them; the spirit of courage and chivalry, of all defense of weakness and all high hatred of wrong and oppression; the spirit of love and devotion that calls for men to-day to fight against ancient wrong and new abuse, against oppression and cruel lust and hardened greed, and all things that make earth foul and curse the children of men; the spirit of glad and confident service that loves men and fights evil, and knows

that the kingdom of sin must perish and the rule of God must come."

The Imitableness of Jesus.—Long ago the church declared its belief in the full and complete humanity of Jesus, as in his full divinity. But that is not enough. Jesus is not only a man, he is the man. In him has been shown once for all what man should be, what he might be. And so we come to the wonderful fact of the imitableness of Jesus. It might be thought that this perfect life would by that fact be wholly removed from us and our endeavor. The saints whom the church has set up and the heroes whom men sometimes glorify are often so removed from our imitation. We cannot all flee the world, or become martyrs, or work other marvelous deeds. But the reason why we cannot imitate these men is just because they are one-sided; and the reason we can follow Jesus is just because he is so complete. We can see, every one of us, our highest life in him.

"O Christ! the tender, loving one,
In whom all deathless graces blend—
The goal to which the cycles run
In spiral paths to one vast end;
As torrents in their courses turn
To mingle with the mother-breast,
All tongues and tribes and nations yearn
For what is found in thee expressed."

Directions for Study

Scripture references: Matthew 11. 25-27; 26. 39; Mark 15. 2-5; 11. 15-17; 14. 32-35. Here again we must not limit ourselves to a few passages. Read the lesson discussion and give illustrations from the Gospels of each of the aspects of Jesus' character ■ discussed above.

What other qualities, if any, would you suggest as characterizing Jesus' relation to his Father? Does the thought of his love for God occur to you? Is that included in what is said about God as being the passion of Jesus' life?

How do men usually show their sense of sin? What would you think if the finest and best man that you know should intimate to you that he was not only without sin, but that he never had sinned? Can you think of Jesus ■ ever having sinned? Why not?

CHAPTER XXVI

THE HEART OF JESUS' MESSAGE—A SUMMARY

It would be of little value to review this course perfunctorily chapter by chapter. But it will be well worth our while to pause long enough to ask what the heart of Jesus' message is. The great philosopher Kant once said that all the searchings of man might be summed up in three questions: What can I know? What must I do? What may I hope for? We will let these three questions give us the outline for a summary of Jesus' teaching.

The Christian Faith According to Jesus

What We Need Most to Know.—There are lesser questions and larger questions of knowledge. Man is curious about the earth and the heavens, about the history of the past, and about himself; but the greatest question is the question about God. Every study leads to this at last. We study geology and biology and botany and the rest, but when we have finished we are still face to face with the real questions: Whence did this world come? What does it mean? Where is it going? We ask the same questions about our individual lives and about the human race and about the worlds above us. And there is no answer to any of these ultimate questions until we find God.

God the Answer to All Questions.—We have found that for Jesus God was not only the supreme interest of his life, but it was the thought of God that decided everything in his teaching. When we ask him what our life is to be, he does not give us a set of rules, but simply says,

"You must be sons like your Father." When we ask about the life of men together, he says, "You must live together as children of this Father." When we ask about prayer, he points us again to God; God hears and God cares, and that is why we should pray, just as children go to their father. When we ask about the future, it is the same; God has all power, and so he will some time rule; he is all love, and so we need not fear.

The God of Power and Righteousness.—What did he teach about this Father? Many things that prophet and psalmist had taught before. The Old Testament shows us the God of power and the God of righteousness, and Jesus believed in that God. He had no thought of bringing a new God. His God was the God who had made heaven and earth according to the old creation story, the God of majesty and power shown to us in that sublime chapter of Isaiah 40. He believed with the prophets in the God of righteousness, the God who hated iniquity and oppression, who loved clean hands and humble hearts more than sacrifice or other offering.

The Father.—But Jesus' supreme word for God was not Creator, nor yet Holy One; it was Father. The holiness and the power are always there, but his great message is that of the unutterable good will of God toward men. He it was who taught men, when they prayed, to say "Our Father." He bade each man to say this, and to know that God cared for him by himself. He lifted religion thus above all divisions of race and class, for this Father cared for every child. He made religion a personal relation, a loving fellowship between each man and his Father. And so he made manhood the one sacred thing on earth, since each man was the object of this God's loving care. Holiness was still present in this God, but it was not a holiness that separated God from men or made of him simply the judge; rather it was the holiness that drew nigh to men to lift them out of their sin, that by its love was overcoming sin in the world. The power was still present in this God of Jesus, but it was a power that was ruled by love and that men could trust with joy.

The Christian Life According to Jesus

The True Life Is Sonship.—If the Christian faith means Fatherhood, then the Christian life can be put in the one word sonship. The heart of this teaching we found in the Sermon on the Mount, and specially in Matthew 6. 38-48. How simple the answer that he gives. He brushes aside endless rules and laws and ceremonies, the burdens that priests and scribes had placed upon men. He has only one rule: that men are to be like their Father, that his spirit of holy good will is to rule their lives. And yet how searching his demand is! Offerings and ceremonies and words and outward deeds will not do. He pushes relentlessly to the heart of the matter. Is the thought pure? he demands. You have not committed murder, but have you been angry? You have not committed adultery, but has there been lust in your glance? If you want to be a son, then the heart of your life, your inner spirit, must belong to God. And that is not all. That inner spirit must rule all the life. You cannot give one holy day and feel that you have satisfied God; you cannot give a tithe and think that God has no more claim. Nothing less than all your life belongs to him. His own spirit of good will must rule it all.

Two Sides of Sonship.—This life of sonship we studied in two relations. It is first of all the life of the son with his Father, and then the life of sons together as brothers. These two cannot be separated. The fellowship with the Father gives depth and power and inspiration to life. The fellowship with men gives the opportunity for expression; without it there is no real love of God, no real service, and no true growth of the soul. Jesus not only joined these together in his teaching of the one law of love for God and man, but illustrated them in his life which joined the nights of prayer with the days of ministry.

The Spirit of Humility and Desire.—What does Jesus teach about the life of the son with his Father? Strangely enough, he does not put righteousness first, as men had done before him. He knows that all that we have must

come from God; that it is what the Father gives us and does for us that makes us sons; and so the first thing that he asks is humility and desire. To desire God and to open your heart to him, that is the first need. This begins in repentance, where a man with clear purpose and true sorrow turns from his sin and faces toward God. It goes through his whole life as a spirit of humility, of utter dependence, of constant high desire. Jesus praises it in the Beatitudes, he sets it forth in the child, he illustrates it in the prayer of the penitent publican.

Obedience and Trust.—Next Jesus puts obedience. That is the test of desire as it is of faith. In the spirit of the old prophets he teaches men that the final test is the obedient will: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father." "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock." And in the judgment scene he does not speak of what men said, or believed, or felt. What he says is, "Inasmuch as ye did."

With obedience he placed trust. If this God is utterly good and at the same time wholly powerful, then it is our part to give ourselves absolutely and to trust him perfectly. The two sins which Jesus points out in Matthew 6 are the divided trust and the divided obedience. Men feared God, but they feared the world also and were anxious about their lives. They loved God, but they loved the world also and were eager for earthly treasures. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Jesus says. "Seek first the kingdom of God," and "Be not anxious"; these are his two rules for the life of peace and strength.

The Life of Prayer.—The heart of this life with God is prayer. Here it all comes to expression. Here penitence and desire, obedience and trust and love, all come to utterance. How much prayer means Jesus set forth by his own example. Luke in particular shows how the great crises in his life were all preceded by nights spent in prayer. In his teaching Jesus is especially concerned with encouraging

men to pray. This is the aim of most of his parables and sayings about prayer. He tried to make men see the goodness of this Father, his interest in all his children, even the least, and his willingness, even eagerness, to give to his children. He wanted to lead them into that life of peace and joy and strength which was his.

The Life with Men.—And then comes the life of the son with his brothers. Here again Jesus has no long list of rules, but he holds up an ideal that lights up all these questions and that has been a transforming power in the world. The simple ideal is this: every man is to be God's son and is to show the spirit of the Father in his life with his brothers. Simple as it is, this again is complete and is searching. Notice the elements involved.

The first is the fact of brotherhood. How that cuts across human passions and prejudices. There are no favored races with God. There are differences in color and capacity and character, but more important than all these differences is what we have in common: we are all children of one God. He knows no divisions.

The second element is the law of brotherhood. This law is determined for us by the Spirit of the Father. It is a law of reverence, because all men are his children and our brothers. It is a law of good will, that does not depend upon what men deserve from us. It is a law of service, in which each man looks upon life as the chance to give to others rather than an effort to get for himself. And this law of good will belongs in business and state, and not only in our private relations. And it should rule the life between nation and nation as well as between man and man.

The Christian and the World.—To these two chief relations one other might be added—a man's relation to the world of things. Here too the thought of the Father must guide us. The son will look upon the world as the Father's house and will therefore not be afraid. Rather he will rejoice in all the good and beautiful things that his Father has made. At the same time he will realize that the house is just the shell that contains the life. He

fails in life who lives for these things and forgets the God who made them; such a man is like the rich farmer whom Jesus called a fool. But there is also a positive side to the world. Its work, its trials, its gifts are all means for making men, for growing character. And work and wealth are man's chance to serve God and his fellows.

The Christian Hope According to Jesus

What May a Man Expect from God?—The third great question that a man asks is, "What may I hope for?" That means first of all the question of God's help to men here and now. Jesus taught the goodness of God whose joy it is to give to his children. He taught that the chief of God's great gifts is forgiveness. This forgiveness with Jesus is not an incident at the beginning of the Christian life, but the heart of God's love throughout our life. It means that our Father, despite our sin and weakness, takes us into his fellowship as his children. In that fellowship everything else is given, joy and peace and strength and love. Forgiveness stands thus for the whole life of God in man: it is God's gift of himself. He taught men the privilege of prayer. With such a God and such gifts awaiting us, prayer becomes a high privilege and a high duty.

The Hope of Future Life.—Jesus offered men a hope that looked beyond this life. He did not say much about heaven, but he held that men would gather as they had reaped (Matthew 25. 31-46). He believed in a judgment upon men. For himself death was only an incident on the way to a larger life. He held up clearly and definitely this hope for others (Luke 16. 22). That life was to be different from this life, but he did not seek to describe or try to answer our questions about it. He could leave all that with his Father, because he believed so utterly in the power of God (Matthew 22. 29-32).

The Hope of the Kingdom.—But the great hope that Jesus held forth was that of the coming rule of God, the "kingdom of God," as it is translated in our Bibles. It

was this thought that filled his heart with joy, this was the gospel, the "good news" that he preached to men. Men have disputed as to when Jesus thought that this new world of God's rule was coming and as to just how it was coming. These are the lesser matters. More important is it to see what Jesus meant by this and to gain his conviction and his vision. God's Kingdom meant for him God's rule in the world, and God's rule meant first of all his life in men. For that reason he saw the beginnings of the Kingdom before his eyes. Where men were healed and sins were forgiven, where he saw penitence and faith and love in men's hearts, there he saw the Kingdom already present. But these were only the beginnings. Some time all the world was to be under God's rule, and some time sin and oppression and misrule of every kind should yield to the one rule of God. In that hope he died; in that hope his followers live this day.

Directions for Study

Read through the entire chapter.

Jot down on paper the three main aspects of Jesus' teaching as indicated in this chapter. Now go through the book and write down the title of each chapter under the head where it belongs. A few chapters will not fit into this division. Note that the book does not, however, follow the order of these three divisions.

As you thus go through the book, write down some of the most helpful or suggestive truths that have come to you from your study of the teachings of Jesus.

Write down in your own words the answer to the following great questions: What do I believe about God? How should a man live with God? How should a man live with his fellow men? What may we hope for the future? After you have written these answers, consider how far your faith has been molded by Jesus Christ.

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